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Walther League

DECEMBER 1944

THE CRESSET

A Christmas Garland

Little Gems for the Little Child

Christmas Verse

The Pilgrim

A REVIEW OF LITERATURE, THE ARTS, AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Vol. VIII No. 2

Thirty Cents

THE CRESSET

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IN THE DECEMBER CRESSET:

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THE CRESSET

VOLUME 8 DECEMBER 1944 NUMBER 2

Notes and Comment

BY THE EDITORS

G. I. Joe

WAR as it is waged from the home front is entirely different from war as G. I. Joe wages it on the field of battle. We bring our big sacrifices and our little sacrifices, we are anxiously concerned about the welfare of our loved ones in the fighting forces, and many of us indulge day in and day out in the exciting game of armchair strategy. Sometimes we have high praise for our political and military leaders; sometimes we find fault vigorously and bluntly with what those leaders are doing, have done, and are about to do. We wonder how this old world of ours will look and how it will fare after the last shot has been fired and peace has come. We ask pointed questions about what is being planned for the postwar era, and we are anxious to learn whether the aims and the motives of our allies are identical in every respect with our own.

Do we always bear in mind that G. I. Joe, who is fighting, bleeding, and dying for us in the death-ridden areas of combat, has no time at all to play the game of armchair strategy or to plan the postwar world? Can we, with all our patriotism and all our anxiety, ever succeed in looking upon this war—and upon all wars—exactly as G. I. Joe looks upon it? G. I. Joe is face to face with grim reality. We understand the grimness of total warfare to some extent; but war does not claw at us and tear at us with the unrelenting fierceness with which it harasses, maims, and slays the boys over there. In the Far East our men must come to grips with malaria, dysentery, and the unspeakable frenzy of the Japanese; on

the European continent they must reckon with cold, rain and mud and must be on their guard every minute against the desperate resourcefulness of an enemy who has his back to the wall.

G. I. Joe will fight to the bitter end. He will fight bravely and victoriously. But even now he is demanding with unmistakable determination and out of the depths of his homesick and trouble-seared heart that the United States and the allies of the United States put forth an honest effort to prevent the seeds of a third global holocaust from being scattered broadcast on the blood-drenched soil of the world. Yes, G. I. Joe wants honest thoughts, honest words, and honest deeds. He is in no mood to be patient with men or women who quibble, split hairs, and disport themselves in the atmosphere of power politics.

Compulsory Military Training?

We cannot but view with apprehension the proposal to introduce a year of compulsory military service as a permanent policy for our country after the war. We are still further disturbed by the strenuous efforts which are being put forth to push this measure through Congress before peace is declared—presumably to take advantage of the wartime emotions of our people, and to "strike while the iron is hot," rather than to risk subjecting this far-reaching measure to the cooler and more dispassionate judgment of peacetime America. When President Roosevelt was asked concerning this matter at a recent press conference, he went on record as favoring a year of compulsory service for American youth, but studiously avoided using the term "military service." It is generally agreed, however, that such a year of service would inevitably include military training as its principal feature.

It seems to us both unwise and unfair to force such a vitally important piece of legislation to a final decision while eleven million of our citizens are off to war and unable to express themselves upon this issue. Their opinions should, in any event, carry great weight in deciding the issue of national military service. Moreover, the desire to enact a measure of this kind while the fever of war is still running high among our people is too obviously a slick political device to be worthy of our honored democratic processes. One might ask the sponsors of this proposal: "Why all the rush? What is there in this bill that cannot wait until after the war? Will this measure not stand the light of

reasoned judgment—on the part of *all* our people and in *normal* times?"

The arguments that can be cited against the plan of compulsory military service are many and cogent. We view with dismay the rising spirit of militarism which such a measure would foster. We are loath to subject our youth to the disruptive effects of such a period of military service. We are perturbed by this further encroachment of the State upon the personal life and freedom of the individual citizen. We believe that the alleged physical benefits which would accrue from this year of service could be better achieved in other and more democratic ways. We are fearful of the deleterious effects which such a program would have upon the ideals and philosophy of our youth. We deplore the introduction of a system which has been a curse to the countries of Europe for 150 years, and to escape which millions of Europeans fled to this land of freedom.

We are impressed, furthermore, with the inconsistency of this plan with the noble objectives of enduring and universal peace for which our statesmen are constantly striving and for which such a promising beginning was made at Dumbarton Oaks. While we are busily contriving the international machinery for a lasting peace, why does our government want to train our American youth for war? For what war? Are we, in spite of all the sacrifices of our sons and brothers, headed for another period of disillusionment, such as that which followed World War I? Is this war being fought in vain, after all?

Powerful educational and religious groups—the National Education Association, the National Child Labor Committee, the National Congress of Parents and Teachers Associations, the Federal Council of Churches, the Roman Catholic hierarchy, and the United Lutheran Church, to cite just a few—have already begun to register vigorous opposition to the compulsory military training program. It is to be hoped that both the executive and legislative branches of our government will be responsive to the voices of these large and responsible elements in our population and that they will devote prolonged and conscientious consideration to a plan which would introduce so drastic a change in the American way of life.

Mankind Is Getting "Better"

And now V-2. We have seen the robot bomb deal indiscriminate slaughter and destruction to

the extent of more than 800,000 demolished buildings and more than 5,000 snuffed-out lives in its brief period of fullest effectiveness. And now V-2, soaring 50 miles into the stratosphere and plunging at 1,000 miles per hour to the earth—too fast to give any warning, to prepare any adequate defence. Experts tell us that if the Nazis had been able to develop these weapons earlier, this war might have had a different ending than is now assured.

At present V-2 has its disadvantages. It can't be aimed accurately. It digs itself too deeply into the earth to do the damage intended. But these defects will be ironed out, if not in time for this war, then for the next—so we are informed. And then V-2, so destructive that a few of them can obliterate a Chicago or New York; so accurate that the Atlantic Ocean is no longer a barrier; so speedy that they can strike without warning, will play a decisive role, as can well be imagined. The destruction of a population can become a matter of minutes, unless we build bigger and better V-2's than the enemy. It is decidedly *the* weapon of the future.

But civilization has already progressed so fast during the last quarter of a century that the future of many more millions will have been cut off entirely in this conflict than in any previous war. Verily, mankind is getting so good, developing so splendidly that soon we shall have solved the future of all of us. There just won't be any! It is certainly high time to throw into the ash can the theory that our civilization is becoming better and better. Better yet, let V-2 explode it for us! And we haven't begun to consider V-3!

Nevertheless, let all the children of God take heart. "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee." Those words are like a fresh wind from heaven blowing over the stench of human pride and self-sufficiency. We need not despair.

The Handwriting on the Wall?

NOVEMBER 7 was also used by Arkansas, Florida and California to vote upon an amendment that would ban all closed shop and maintenance of membership contracts with labor unions. This amendment, widely hailed as guaranteeing the freedom to work (and certainly this freedom is far from least among the ideals democracy upholds), was carried in Arkansas and Florida. In California it failed.

One of the reasons for its failure in the West Coast commonwealth was revealed a few days later when Cecil B. DeMille was threatened with the suspension of his membership in the American Federation of Radio Artists. Why? Simply because he had neglected or refused to pay a one dollar assessment, to be used in fighting the amendment. And if Mr. De Mille was personally in favor of its passage? That made no difference; union officials were opposed. And what if even the majority of AFRA members were opposed? When an issue is of sufficient importance to be decided at the polls, no organization has the right to coerce any member into supporting or not supporting that issue against his will and better judgment. But the threat of losing one's job through failure to come across with the desired contribution is a potent weapon.

We heard enough, reliably reported, about these forced contributions during the past political campaign to recognize this typical tactic. And it leads us to wonder what would happen if such an amendment were offered in the even more highly industrialized sections of our country. Arkansas and Florida are not primarily industrial and consequently union strength and activity are not as powerful as they would be in New York, Pennsylvania, Michigan, or Illinois. Would it happen there, as it did in California, that many a worker, already a union member under compulsion, would be forced to contribute to the cutting of his own throat?

The labor unions have in the past used their united strength to achieve many worthwhile and necessary gains for the working man. But if they persist in abusing their power, they will lose many worthy objectives. The handwriting on the wall is small as yet, but it is there nevertheless. The very fact that such an amendment was proposed in three states indicates that even in a democracy, whose processes are often ponderously slow, the people are becoming aware of this threat to personal freedom. The fact that in two of these three states the amendment carried is further proof. It is a reminder that, if the present administration will not protect the electorate's ideal of democracy, the people themselves will take the matter in their own hands and tell organized labor: Your excesses must stop!

Along Literary Byways

FOR a while we had given up gathering these notes. Was anything good being written these days? Yes and no. The reporters on the various fronts were doing

a remarkable job. Some of the war books *may* (note the italics) rank with Xenophon and Thucydides. . . . Ernie Pyle's *Here Is Your War* is certainly the classic account of the foot soldier slogging through the mud and slush of Europe. The next generation of high school youths will have to read this book. . . .

Does anyone have one or two copies of Augustine's *City of God (De Civitate Dei)*? A friend in the amphibious engineers down in the Southwest Pacific wants a copy to read and meditate on. The other copy would go into the personal luggage of a chaplain bound for overseas. . . . We still can't understand the enthusiasm for *The Robe*. Perhaps our nature doesn't have enough sweetness and light. *The Emperor's Physician* by J. R. Perkins is much better stuff. . . . $125,000 and more goes to Elizabeth Goudge for *Green Dolphin Street*. *Forever Amber* is on the top of all best seller lists. A. J. Cronin's *The Green Years* gets $200,000 from Hollywood. Too bad the financial reward these writers get doesn't prove moral and intellectual quality.

We are still pulling for Trollope. When was the last time you read *Barchester Towers*? Nothing like a re-reading of that venerable account of antics in an English parish to get the bad taste of contemporary fiction out of one's mouth. . . . Speaking of good books and good contemporary poetry, not enough attention has been paid to W. H. Auden's latest volume of noble verse, *For the Time Being*. The *Christmas Oratorio,* the lengthier poem in the volume, is one of the most moving presentations of the Nativity we have read. Worth buying and keeping. Support our poets.

At last the brothers Grimm are coming into their own. The Pantheon Press has just published a new English translation of the famous tales. The book is a magnificent example of the illustrator's and printer's art.

Once a year we try to determine which were some of the best books of the year that crossed our desk. Our list would include the following: *Freedom Road* by Howard Fast; *The History of Rome Hanks* by Joseph Stanley Pennell; *For the Time Being* by W. H. Auden; *Boston Adventure* by Jean Stafford; *The Leaning Tower* by Katherine Anne Porter; *When Johnny Comes Marching Home* by Dixon Wecter; *Lee's Lieutenants* (volume three) by Douglas Southall Freeman; *Basic History of the United States* by Charles and Mary Beard; *The Time for Decision* by Sumner Welles; *For We Have This Treasure* by Paul Scherer; *In Quest of a Kingdom* by Leslie D. Weather-

head; *Yankee from Olympus* by Catherine D. Bowen.

Note that we have included two theological books. We could have made an excellent list of recent books of a religious nature published within the past twelve months. These two will give you a fair sampling of the top-notch thinking that is being done by the churchmen of our day.

Now let the brickbats fly! . . . If you have a better or more exclusive list, send it on. . . . Mind you, this was not THE list. Just some of the *good* books which did not collect dust on our desk.

Epitaph to a Mule

OUR fighting men are suffering untold hardships for our sake on the far-flung and widely scattered battlefields of this war. They know the grimness, the cruelty, and the sordidness of warfare, and they are determined to put an end to this embittered conflict as quickly and as conclusively as possible. With it all, however, they are maintaining their keen sense of humor. Have you read about the memorial erected to a mule who was a casualty in France? The name of that mule was Maggie, and her epitaph reads as follows:

In memory of Maggie, who in her time kicked two colonels, four majors, ten captains, twenty-four lieutenants, forty-two sergeants, four hundred and thirty-two other ranks, and—one Mills bomb.

"Fox-Hole Religion"

WITH this striking term the editor of *The Lutheran Teacher,* a publication of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America, has recently designated the religious sentiments which men at the battle fronts have experienced in moments of great danger and which have received much publicity.

No doubt many a person has perhaps for the first time in his life given serious thought to religion when the bombs exploded round about him while he sought safety in the fox-hole. Perhaps for many a one such an experience has become the turning point in his life. If so, the fox-hole was a means which God employed for his spiritual rescue.

For others, we may assume the fox-hole experience was but a transient one. Their thoughts of God and of prayer lasted only until the danger was passed. Afterwards they returned to their former way of life and gave little or no thought to God.

Aside from these considerations, fox-hole religion suggests another thought. It raises the

question: Why should it require the fox-hole to make religion function? It is unfortunate that the religious knowledge and convictions of a surprisingly large number of persons is so shallow that it requires unusual stimuli to rouse it to practical application.

We are inclined to boast of America as being a Christian nation, but it is tragic when we realize that we fall woefully short of being a nation of Christians. Consider the 17,000,000 children of school age in our land who are growing up as pagans without any religious instruction and training whatsoever. When so many American homes neglect their sacred duties and blessed opportunities, we need not be surprised that the Lord uses the fox-holes to accomplish His ends. A Christianity which is not a superficiality, a mere sham, will function constantly, and fox-hole experiences will not be necessary to identify it.

Mr. Stettinius

IT will be difficult, for a while, to accustom ourselves to the fact that Cordell Hull is no longer Secretary of State. After all, Mr. Hull has been head of the State Department as long as Mr. Roosevelt has been president. And that is a very long time.

Now, at a crucial stage in our international relations and in our planning for a post-war security program, illness has forced Mr. Hull to resign. Although no man is indispensable, his departure from the scene at this time is most inopportune. It is true, of course, that his successor, Mr. Stettinius, has been groomed in recent months to take over the responsibilities of the office, particularly in his capacity as chairman of the Dumbarton Oaks conference.

Mr. Stettinius is confronted with perhaps the greatest task ever to face an American Secretary of State. He comes to his high position as a comparative novice in the art of statecraft. He is, moreover, the youngest Secretary of State since Mr. Randolph, in the cabinet of President Washington. He must adjust himself to a situation almost unique in American annals, wherein the President has personally assumed many of the functions which traditionally have fallen to the Secretary of State.

At the same time, there is much in Mr. Stettinius' character and background to inspire the confidence of the American people and make us applaud the President's choice. He has been reared in the American tradition. Although born to a position of wealth and social prestige, he has consistently kept the common touch. A business executive, he has shown

a warm sympathy with the cause of labor. He is temperate in his judgments and conciliatory in his personal relationships. He is a man of good will—a quality which our country sorely needs in those who guide its destinies.

The eyes of the world are upon Edward Stettinius. We wish him well.

A Century Old

THE newspapers for obvious reasons gave scant space to the Centennial Congress of the Cooperative League of the United States which met in Chicago recently. Magazines like *Tide, Advertising Age, United States News* did, however, take note of the activities and resolutions of the fifteen hundred delegates and visitors, and James Rorty's report in the *Commonweal* of November 10, "The Co-op David," is a particularly valuable summary of the meeting and of the prospects for the cooperative movement in general. In the one hundred years since the twenty-eight weavers of Rochdale, England, organized the first cooperative, the movement has grown into a "world-wide company of more than a hundred million men and women." In the United States the co-ops have a total membership of two and a half million persons and will do a business of three-quarters of a billion this year. They own 2,450 retail stores and 115 manufacturing plants. It is not strange, therefore, that the business interests of the nation are beginning to evidence some concern and are reportedly developing the National Tax Equality Association as an "anti-cooperative front." Although this association is questioning the validity of the tax exemptions granted cooperatives as non-profit organizations, there is reason to suspect that they are also aware of the threat which the philosophy of the cooperative movement is to the capitalistic system. They must know, too, that the cooperatives are undergirding their expansion with a solid educational and recreational program which applies the best techniques of group work. This is undoubtedly one of the reasons for the notable achievements of the cooperatives in race relationships, particularly with the negro. It is significant and revealing that Monsignor Ligutti was the only churchman to appear as speaker on the program of the Centennial Congress.

The high hopes which men see in the cooperative movement are vividly presented by H. M. Kallen in the article which he wrote for *The Saturday Review of Literature,* September 9, "The War Against the Chain-Gang of Production," in commemoration of

the hundredth birthday of the consumer cooperatives. We quote, "One of the tasks of the cooperative movement entering upon its second hundred years, is to think out in detail how it may be filled and employed to win the war, and adapted to assure the peace. Its other task is to communicate this knowledge as a fighting faith to the peoples and the governments of the United Nations—the faith that the economy of consumer cooperation, based upon management by, of, and for the forgotten men of the world, can channel all the liberties of man into the structure of lasting peace." The gains made by the cooperatives during the past few years and the attention now being given them by big business interests are bound to force the basic issues at stake between them more fully into open conflict. It would be unfortunate if, in the resolving of these issues, the influence of the Church would have no part and these vital questions should be discussed and decided without the guidance of the changeless principles of the Christian ethic.

Resurgent France

DURING the past few months, France has made great strides toward becoming again a welcome member of the family of nations. Under the leadership of DeGaulle she has evidently been setting her house in order—instigating social reforms, putting her people back in gainful employment, and restabilizing her economy. And then came the day when she was granted full recognition by England, Russia, and the United States. Naturally that fact, to France, was tantamount to the prisoner's pardon. Now for the first time in years comes her chance to regain self-respect and to show herself as a true ally.

It is only logical that she should take the next step—to make a demand that France be given an equal voice in determining the fate of Germany. It will, perhaps, be difficult to convince the "Big Three," each of which has been expending its personal and material resources, that the former collaborist nation is entitled to that much. But we must face the facts. Most French people have always been sympathetic with our cause. France is now furnishing men and materials for Germany's defeat. Her geographic position makes reasonable the fact that she should desire some part in the making of the peace plans. While we may not be ready to grant her an equal voice, our sense of fair play tells us that France will have to be heard when the fate of Germany is decided.

Educational Parasites

As the war draws nearer an end, we Americans must prepare ourselves for attempts at some of the most cold-blooded swindles ever worked on people who have seen some real swindles. Some of these off-color practices are sure to take place in the educational world. Fly-by-night schools, especially in the vocational and business fields, are very likely to mushroom in every section of the country. If there is the probable period of prosperity after the war, these institutions will be out to get their share of the spoils. High school graduates will be misled by promises of jobs, even of civil service positions; by high pressure salesmanship; by all kinds of speed-up plans whereby the student will automatically become a $5,000-a-year man after a six-week course.

Fortunately some states are already taking steps to protect their citizens from these parasites of the educational world. The New Jersey State Department of Public Instruction is busy now inspecting and licensing the approved private trade and vocational schools of that state. New York has accomplished a like check on these types of schools there. These are real steps forward, steps which should be followed by every state in the union.

Philippine Dividends

We Americans have long been called imperialistic. We have always been accused of being money-mad, of having our hands in other people's pockets. When our statesmen have criticized the manner in which other nations have treated their dependents, we have been curtly told to clean up our own backyard.

It is true that we have often failed to treat others in the spirit of the Christian. But then again, those for whom we have been responsible have been shown much more consideration than others in like positions.

Take our relationship with the Filipinos, for example. Though not widely publicized, it was a definite fact that upon our reconquest of Leyte, the Philippine government went ashore with the first troops. This administration began its task at once—the task of governing some eighteen million Filipinos, most of whom were still under the Japanese yoke.

This little incident seems to sum up, pretty well, the general attitude our government has assumed toward these people in past years. Could this attitude be the reason the Filipino has carried on the fight, in any way possible and for so long, against overwhelming odds?

The PILGRIM

"All the trumpets sounded for him on the other side." —PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

BY O. P. KRETZMANN

Journey Into Joy

THE air is still and cold tonight as if the world were close to the end of a long spell of homesickness, its hush a waiting rather than a memory. . . . As I became aware of it, I remembered that once more the time had come for my yearly journey to Bethlehem. . . . The preparation for the trip, I knew, would be longer this year because I had to rid myself of much more baggage. . . . I would have to begin, not as on earthly journeys, by packing and collecting aids for the long way, but, as on all heavenly pilgrimages, by throwing away things which would slow me down. . . . The little worries and fears over the future, the books I had read, the small ambitions which were encrusting life, the vanity of soul and pride of heart, the heavy burden of little faith, the hidden hurt of broken things—all these I could not carry to the Child. . . . There might be room for them in the inn, but not at the manger. . . . And when I would finally reach the last rise in the long road from the depth of my years to Bethlehem, white in the light of an errant star, I knew I would want to travel fast and light. . . . The stable would be as small as ever and there would have to be room, not only for me, but for several beasts of the field, a few shepherds, and a great company from the ends of the earth and the expanses of time. . . . I knew I would not be able to enter with baggage; in fact, no one ever has. . . . We can and must climb Calvary with the burden of our sins; but at the Manger they are put away for the white and joyous adoration of a childlike heart which alone can have eyes to see God as a Child. . . .

A long journey for us who are so far down the ways of time. . . . Long in time and mind and heart. . . . A few weeks ago, on the eleventh of November, I stood with thousands of men and women on State Street in Chicago as the

clock struck eleven and the muted bugles sounded taps for the dead. . . . The thin, bent shoulders of an old woman beside me shook with memories brought to life by the sound of the bugles. . . . Memories of the terror of war striking most cruelly, as always, the hearts of the mothers of the world. . . . Of a voice that has now become silence in her heart. . . . Of agony for one child in whom are all the dead children of the world. . . . I turned away and entered a store which was already bright with Christmas. . . . Toys, lights, candles, trees, flowers, little churches, wax angels. . . . A dozen steps between the sorrow we have made and the joy He has brought. . . . A dozen steps and yet here was, and is, the longest journey any man can take. . . . Into the lighted dead of night to meet God at a manger. . . . into the far and holy peace for which thousands of weary, tear-dimmed eyes will look as the blue December dusk again falls over the world this Christmas Eve. . . . From the pride and power of life into the humility and poverty of a manger. . . . The journey into ultimate joy. . . .

A long journey tonight and tomorrow. . . . But I remembered how often, by the moving and mysterious pity of God, men had covered the distance in a moment of time. . . . Last year Dr. Stuart Hutcheson had told the story of one of these moments. . . . It happened on Christmas Eve in 1870, when the Germans were besieging Paris.

The French soldiers were, many of them, volunteers who had entered the trenches in defence of their homes and families. It was a still and lovely night. The sky was bright with stars and the new-fallen snow lay upon the ground. In the early evening one of the citizen soldiers of France approached his superior officer and asked permission to leave the lines for a few moments. He was told that his request could not be granted. To give him leave to go back into the city was impossible. Severe fighting was expected every moment. He replied: "I do not ask to go home, but over yonder," pointing in the direction of the German lines. The officer was surprised and asked who he was. He gave the name of one of the most famous singers of France. He was told it was madness, that he would be shot if he showed his head above the entrenchments. But he persisted and the officer gave his consent. In an instant he had leaped over the embankment and was on the outside. He took a few steps forward, stood still and saluted. Then he began to sing on the still night air that lovely song of Adam, "O Holy Night."

Not a sound was heard. Not a shot broke the stillness, and the song was finished. Back in the French lines, the soldiers, for many of whom this was the last night on earth, stood in tears as they listened to the Song of the Nativity. The singer saluted and

climbed back over the rampart. The next moment a tall German artillery captain, with his steel-shod helmet on his head, climbed out of the trenches on the other side, advanced a few steps to the front, saluted, and between the two armies, armed to the teeth, sang that hymn of their childhood:

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head;
The stars in the sky looked down where He lay—
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

When he came to the last stanza of Luther's hymn the men in the lines behind him joined in the song:

Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask Thee to stay
Close by me forever, and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,
And take us to heaven to live with Thee there.

Nor would that last journey be longer than my journey to Bethlehem. . . . Heaven and the manger lie in the same direction and at the same distance. . . . Not so far away, after all. . . . The walls of the centuries fall and it is forever now. . . . Now is Christ born in Bethlehem. . . . A lifting of the head, a whispered prayer, "Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask Thee to stay," and the journey is ended. . . . Here and now. . . . Here in time and tears and terror. . . . Now in peace and joy and hope. . . . Brought to Bethlehem by Him, staying in Bethlehem with Him, rejoicing in Bethlehem in Him. . . .

And so it is really a great journey into great joy which I, by the mercy of God, shall begin this Christmas Eve. . . . On one night, on one glowing night of all time, all the joy of the world was in a manger. . . . The joy of the splendor of God breaking through the world's darkness. . . . Of a Savior from sin. . . . Of the beat of angel wings near. . . . Of the great and saving joining of majesty and meekness, of death and life, of a sinless Man among sinful men, of God dressed in the clothes of man's lowliness to lift him into the robes of His royalty. . . .

But now it is Christmas Eve, and I must become a child again. . . . The midnight is white and frosty. . . . The shadows around me are blue and the sky is very dark blue, the stars twinkling like the lights on our Christmas tree. . . . The street before my house is empty and deserted in its whiteness. . . . The windows of the houses are bright and yellow. . . . Inside everything is bright and warm with lights and carols. . . . Here I shall wait for Him to come —because the journey to the Child is finally only a waiting for Him. . . . The shepherds are with me, and the angels; and Mary and

Joseph and Peter and John; and father and mother and friends all over the world; and children who know His joy better than I. . . . For them a simple modern carol:

The Christ-child lay on Mary's lap,
His hair was like a light.
(O weary, weary were the world,
But here is all aright.)

The Christ-child lay on Mary's breast,
His hair was like a star.
(O stern and cunning are the kings,
But here the true hearts are.)

The Christ-child lay on Mary's heart,
His hair was like a fire.
(O weary, weary is the world,
But here the world's desire.)

Christmas Thoughts

A FEW thoughts for Christmas from here and there. . . . A year ago the *New York Times* said editorially: "Fear and sorrow, and the hate that is born of them, bestride the earth. They hold their lines, advance their armies, destroy cities, trample down growing crops, parade in bitter triumph with the thumping of hobbed boots and the flash of bayonets. But we know on Christmas morning that their strategy is doomed to fail. The human spirit will not endure for a long time the degradation of their presence. God will not be mocked forever. Ever the truth will force its way through the dust of battle. We are of one body and one flesh—the black, the yellow, the white. It is our own flesh that is torn when the shell explodes, that is pierced by the thrusting bayonet. Our hate recoils upon us and destroys us. It is our love that survives and is immortal.

"It is the fear and hate that are impractical and visionary. The spirit that is evoked on this morning of gifts and rejoicing and good-will is more practical than all our inventions. Not tanks, nor guns, nor bombs, nor armed fleets can destroy it, nor the mightiest armies: at the last it is they that will be destroyed. It will be the lips of the most valorous that will whisper in the end, after the battle cries are silenced, 'Peace on earth; good will toward men.'"

Is there too much shopping and calculating exchange of gifts at this season? . . . "And still," writes Winifred Kirkland in the *Atlantic Monthly,* "I believe this Jesus of Nazareth, who wore our flesh often so joyously, who went to weddings and feasts, who watched the children playing in the market place and knew by heart their lilting rhymes, this Jesus who had watched a worn hand patch a worn coat, who had perhaps himself helped tread the grapes in some upland vineyard, who had perhaps himself broken a glowing

lily to brighten some despairing home, who had yearned to gather all his murderous Jerusalem to the safe home-place of his heart even as a hen gathers her brood beneath her wings—I believe this same Jesus stands gazing in at all our Christmas trees and at the children dancing around them, and laughs with them his laughter that shall one day ring victorious down all the dark ages. Of all his strange sayings that have been preserved to us the strangest is 'My joy I leave with you,' spoken to his friends on the blackest evening of his life." . . .

Or we remember the famous paragraph from Alexander Smith concerning the now forgotten *Lyra Germanica:* "This book contains surely one of the most touching of human compositions—a song of Luther's. The great Reformer's music resounds to this day in our churches; and one of the rude hymns he wrote has such a step of thunder in it, that the father of Frederick the Great, Mr. Carlyle tells us, used to call it 'God Almighty's Grenadier March.' This one I speak of is as of another mood, and is soft as tears. To appreciate it thoroughly, one must think of the burly, resolute, humorous, and withal tender-hearted man, and of the work he accomplished. He it was, the Franklin's kite, led by the highest hand, that went up into the papal thunder-cloud hanging black over Europe; and the angry fire that broke upon it burned it not, and in roars of boltless thunder the apparition collapsed, and the sun of truth broke through the inky fragments on the nations once again. He it was who, when advised not to trust himself in Worms, declared, 'Although there be as many devils in Worms as there are tiles on the housetops, I will go.' He it was who, when brought to bay in the splendid assemblage, said, 'It is neither safe nor prudent to do aught against conscience. Here stand I—I cannot do otherwise. God help me. Amen.' The rock cannot move—the lightnings may splinter it. Think of these things, and then read Luther's 'Christmas Carol,' with its tender inscription: 'Luther—written for his little son, Hans, 1535.' Coming from another pen, the stanzas were perhaps not much; coming from *his,* they move one like the finest eloquence. This song went deep into the hearts of the common people, and is still sung from the dome of the Kreuz Kirche in Dresden before daybreak on Christmas morning." . . .

Turning inward for a moment. . . . Does not Martha Turner speak for all who see men as they are? . . .

Well, shall we mock at Him
This Christmas time

And sing of peace when we have only fighting?
No, let's at least be honest in our weakness:
"God, we have failed again
We don't seem very apt
At being children—
And some of us are sorry—"
But why try again?
After so many failures
To think we can do better?
The stars come out so slowly
And in the quiet
Surely there is the hush of angel wings—
"God let us go
We've made a ghastly Christmas!"
O Son of God
How can You love us so?

But there are those who do not know of our failure. . . . Christmas—the Feast of children. . . . Perhaps they who now sing carols unafraid will keep Christmas better than we. . . . Wesley Ingles writes "For Young Mothers at Christmas":

Take you the holly and wreathe it gladly for His brow
That once wore thorn;
And let the little scarlet drops remind you now
That once His brow was torn.

Take of the silken ribbon many long red strips
And tie your bows.
Forget not the bloody lash, nor how His quiet lips
Were sealed amid His woes.

Take up the tree and gently, gently plant its stock,
And nail its base.
Recall how rudely His was planted, hear the shock,
And see His anguished face.

Take now the children's gifts and pile them neatly there;
Take all the toys.
Consider Golgotha and breathe an earnest prayer
For new-born little boys.

Despite pomp and circumstance, dictator and decay, hate and fear: "Unto you is born this day a Savior.". . . Son of the Living God, for a Help of the races of men dead in Adam, the Desire of Nations, Strength of strength, King of kings, Man over men, meek soldier without pride or pomp, a crib His cradle and a manger His altar. . . . The music and the message of it are still sweet and true. . . . Here is the center of the world. . . . The shepherds have come, and for them and us nothing remains but our poor adoration, our faltering love and His perfect peace. . . .

A Christmas Garland

BY THE CRESSET ASSOCIATES

Glory to God

It was a cold Christmas eve more than forty years ago. A heavy quilt of gleaming white snow warmed the frozen earth. We children met in the parish school at 7:30 and took our accustomed seats. The usual hard discipline of the teacher, who tried day after day to keep under control more than a hundred unruly youngsters, seemed absent. The air in that smoky room was charged with intense expectation. For promptly at 7:45 we would get the signal to rise, take our place in the procession, and march to the church for the Christmas eve service.

As it seems to me now, that evening meant more to me than to others. I would have the opportunity to recite my long piece with all the relatives fixing their eyes on me. There would be the distribution of gifts after the program—a pencil or two, a handkerchief, a story book, and a five-pound paper bag three-quarters full of mixed nuts and hard candies and a huge orange. Immediately after church there would be the festivities at grandma's. More gifts there, and wine and cookies for the grown folks, and chocolate candies for the children. Then we would all walk down the narrow street to the home of Aunt E. . . and Uncle L. . . for another Christmas celebration. That would be a special thrill because they lived in a large new modern house, and they had electric lights, and one could light up a whole room by merely pushing a little button fastened on the wall. When we left, my brother and I would carry home a large laundry basket heaped with expensive gifts. Home after midnight, and to bed. Up at 5:30. At 6 all the relatives would come over to our house for the annual Christmas

breakfast and feast on mother's stollen and home-made country sausage. Then the double door would be pushed back, and we would all stream into that front room where a Christmas tree occupied fully one-third of the space. Beneath the tree there would be mountains of Christmas gifts. And I thought of the afternoon of Christmas day when we would try out the new skates—if Santa brought them—on the river in spite of twenty below zero.

As the column of more than one hundred fifty children was about to enter the nave of the church through the double doors expecting to see at the left of the chancel a giant Christmas tree resplendent in the light of many candles, a concert of "oh's" and "ah's" poured over our lips and floated out into the dark shadows of the dimly lighted church. The one giant tree was absent. Instead there were three small trees in the central forepart of the chancel resting on the joints of a wooden triangle supported by two uprights. Beneath the triangle and between the uprights there hung a dazzling white curtain and on it were embossed in loud colors ten-inch Gothic characters which spelled out *"Glory to God in the highest."* Candles hidden behind the curtain illuminated the inscription.

"Glory to God in the highest." How often we had recited it! How often we had sung it! As we walked up that center aisle toward the inscription, I found myself on the fields of Bethlehem. I, too, was surrounded by the glory of the Lord that shone about the shepherds. I, too, heard the heavenly messenger tell about the babe lying in the manger. I, too, saw that host of angels clothed in long white flowing garments. I, too, joined in that jubilant chorus, *"Glory to God in the highest. . . ."*

When I sat down on the chair assigned to me, my eyes were still glued on that inscription. Never before did so few words mean so much to me. Never before did all else seem so unspeakably vain and void.

Our Lonely Savior

OUR Savior was often lonely when He sojourned for a time on earth. He, the holy Son of a holy Father, came down from His everlasting throne on high into a world infested to the core with evil. He was born and grew to manhood in a world in which the Prince of Darkness was holding high carnival.

The Son of God and the Son of Man dwelt in a land reeking with the foul air of Pharisaism and wallowing in the devil-may-care phi-

losophy of the Sadducees. Christ preached to scoffers, to haughty pagans, to blind leaders of the blind.

Yes, Jesus, the Godman, was often lonely when He lived for a while among men as the Word which had been made flesh. His heart bled for those who would have none of His message. At times He pleaded with them; at times He castigated them with words that cut and burned. Some welcomed Him as their own Redeemer and as the Redeemer of all mankind. They bore witness joyfully and staunchly to the soul-saving faith which filled their hearts. But those who brushed Jesus of Nazareth aside as an imposter and laughed Him to scorn as a pretender were far more numerous than the men, the women, and the children who believed and were sure that He, and He alone, was the way, the truth, and the life.

Jesus Christ is lonely today even though there are Christmas celebrations in millions of homes throughout the world. You and I cannot say how many regard the trappings and the tinsel of mere earthly joy as the sum and substance of the Christmastide; but we do know that in our time sin in all its subtlety and ugliness continues to mock the Savior and to make light of His message even as it did when He "made Himself of no reputation and took upon Him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men."

The eternal Son of the eternal Father once said:

> How think ye? If a man have an hundred sheep and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine and goeth into the mountains and seeketh that which is gone astray?
>
> And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep than of the ninety and nine which went not astray.

Just as a faithful keeper of sheep feels sad and lonely when one of his flock is lost, so Jesus, the Good Shepherd, feels sad and lonely when at Christmastime in the year 1944, He sees that many prefer the way of destruction to the way of life.

The unbounded happiness that fills the hearts of Christians whenever they commemorate the birthday of their Savior impels them to proclaim Christ's message of salvation boldly, gratefully, and without ceasing.

G I Christmas

It's going to be a different Christmas for us this year. Some of us will be sitting in foxholes; some of us will be on storm-lashed seas; some of us will be riding the turbulent skies;

some of us will be in bleak training camps.

But wherever we are, sweltering in the steaming islands; shivering in the gloomy *Festung Europa,* or lonely in Spartan barracks, we will all be thinking of Christmas back home.

We'll think of Christmas trees shining through hospitable windows. Of the voices of carollers, thin and sweet under the skies. Of snow crunching underfoot and of stars reflecting on the smooth ice above the bridge.

We'll think of Christmas cookies and stollen in the pantry. Of candy canes and wreaths on the door. Of children singing in church and the crowded lobby of the post office. Of the colored lights bright against the snow and the shoppers crowding the stores and the laughter at the bowling alleys.

We'll think of stacks of Christmas cards. And tissue paper strewn on the floor about just-opened gifts. We'll think about the kids, eager to try their new skates. And Dad puffing on an extravagantly good cigar in his favorite rocker. And Mother smiling quietly and hurrying back to the kitchen for a swift peek at the roasting turkey.

We'll think of those things and wonder if they'll be waiting for us when we come back.

And we'll know that they will be. For these are the really permanent things of life, the things that live in the heart. Not the concrete and steel abutments we are even now destroying. Our home town—and the things it stands for—will always be awaiting our return. For they are founded on the one indestructible . . . Christianity.

Here the church and the home and the workaday world are all bound so closely together that all shall stand as long as one shall stand. And in our foxholes and our ships and our planes we have long since re-discovered that deep and abiding assurance that the Church, that Christianity is unchanging and unchangeable. It shall stand. And with it shall stand those things we cherish of home.

It will not be, for us in the services or those at home, a *Merry* Christmas. But it will be a *Happy* Christmas, a day to reassure us that the things we are fighting for will be waiting for us when we return to celebrate another Christmas in our own home.

Et Incarnatus Est

WHO *for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary and was made man.*

Thus the Nicene Creed in profound simplicity gathers together all that Christmas must ever signify to humankind, if we are to grasp the fundamental meaning of the Incarnation at all. A changeless Christ for changeless man. A Savior for a fallen race. "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior which is Christ the Lord."

Last summer many of us hoped that the war in Europe would be over by Christmas. At this writing the realization of that hope is not apparent. But whether the war against Germany is over or not, certainly the war and every vicious thing connected with it speak to us of the fact of man's sin in unmistakable terms. And the soldier keeping Christmas in his chilly fox-hole, the bombing victims keeping the feast amid the rubble of what was once a home, and we who celebrate the Nativity around our firesides, all need to receive into our inmost being the true, the uplifting, the heaven-born significance of Christmas: "Christ the Savior is born!"

And we must pray for that which the matchless Collect for Christmas Day suggests to us, that Collect which for fifteen centuries has echoed and re-echoed in the churches at Christmastime the world over: "Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, that the new birth of Thine Only-begotten Son in the flesh may set us free who are held in the old bondage under the yoke of sin." In such simple, yet majestic terms, this ancient prayer strikes at the heart and core of our deepest need. We speak of freedom, we are committed to a war to guarantee the four freedoms to the world, liberty is dear to us all; but there can be no full realization of any sort of freedom unless we have that freedom from sin which the Divine Prince of Peace came to bring. "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

Room for Jesus

It is Christmas Eve. The city is large. The lights adorning the great thoroughfare seem to shine more brightly. They obscure the glory of the stars overhead. Throngs armed with parcels move through the streets with a lighter step. The corner display windows of the large stores are embellished with fancy flowing frocks directing attention to a New Year's Eve frolic. A few days prior they were tantalizing youth with Punch-and-Judy shows, animated fairy-tale characters, toys, and Santa Claus.—No room for Jesus.

The large hotels are thronged to capacity. The bars are crowded beyond capacity. Liquid exhilaration flows in a continuous stream. Dining halls are festively decorated. A crooner belches a ballad about a blonde. A swing band motivates the masses into rhythmic motion. Generous displays of pulchritude stimulate man's sinful flesh.—No room for Jesus.

A decrepit, disheveled character quickly moves away from the gay throngs. It has been a simple matter to garner an extra supply of silver on Christmas Eve. He will soon discover a basement retreat where he can imbibe debilitating beverages. He will soon be oblivious to reality. A dime will provide shelter.—No room for Jesus.

The scene shifts to a residential section of the city. A church, brilliantly lighted, occupies the corner of the block. Standing beside it is a school. The bell rings. Teachers and children, Christ's shepherds and lambs, march from school to church.—Here is room for Jesus. Songs of praise and thanksgiving reveal God's love for man.

Again the scene shifts, now to an island in the South Pacific. The enemy knows that Christians are celebrating the birth of Jesus. He prepares to launch a vicious attack. The Christian knows the value and need of eternal vigilance. John stoops low in his foxhole and adjusts the mechanism of his rifle. The bayonet is attached. The grenades are shifted to a more convenient position. He looks up at the stars, the same stars that shone on the stable at Bethlehem. He bows his head, folds his hands, and fervently repeats the beautiful stanza he learned not so many years ago.

> Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child,
> Make Thee a bed, soft, undefiled,
> Within my heart, that it may be
> A quiet chamber kept for Thee.

He moves over. The foxhole is small, but there is room for Jesus.

There Shall Be Peace

THERE is something of a paradox about Christmas in wartime—the pealing of the bells amid the cannon's roar, the song of the angels above the din of hate-filled voices, the shining of the Star through the smoke of battle, the tidings of great joy in a world of pain and tears, the coming of an Infant to a world whose god is Power. Do not the bells give a hollow sound this wartime Christmas, and does not the song of the angels waver? Is not the Star beclouded, and the joyful tidings—do they not fall upon ears that are deaf? And will not the Holy

Infant once more be turned away by callous unbelief?

"Ah, no," says the Christian. "I have never heard the bells more sweet and clear, nor seen the Star more bright. The angels' song and the joyful news have never thrilled me more. And the Holy Child has never been so welcome as today!"

For Christmas in wartime brings to the Christian heart the hope of a better and eternal peace —a peace that bombs cannot shatter nor evil men destroy. It is the peace that dawned upon the world when Christ was born in Bethlehem.

As we think of that peace this Christmastide, the peace which, in a divine paradox, pervades a world convulsed by war, there come to mind the unforgettable lines of Hugh Kerr:

I cannot see the Christ-Child for the soldiers marching past;
I cannot hear the angels for the bugle's angry blast.
But I know the Bells are ringing
And that Faith and Hope are clinging
To the Day when Love shall crown the world at last.

I cannot see the Christ-Child, for the smoke is in my eyes,
I cannot hear the Shepherds for the little children's cries;
But I know the Bells are ringing
And I think I hear the singing
Of the Day when Peace like Morning Dawn shall rise.

I cannot see the Christ-Child, for the clouds hang dark and low;
I cannot hear the Wise Men, for the conflict rages so;
But I know the Bells are ringing,
And that Christmas Morn is bringing
In the Golden Day, foretold so long ago.

Why He Was Born

TONIGHT I must find some place where I am not known. I know that, as I am, I have no business mingling with the decent, honest people that belong to this fine church. But, God, dear God, it's Christmas Eve, and I want all the gift of free forgiveness which the Christ Child brought. I need it more than anyone. You know my prayers. Into your patient ears and heart I have poured out my fears and dread—my trembling and my terror for the days ahead. You understand. On nights like this, across the world, there must be more like me—lost, lonely souls who never dare to lift their heads again because they loved too deeply and forgot, in one brief, blazing moment, what the cost would be. You are so very near to me tonight—You always have been in these isolated days since I have dared to venture out alone only

at night where people would not see the evidences of my guilt and shame. But this is Christmas Eve, dear God!—Were there not some in Nazareth who hatefully imagined very evil things about the daughter of Ann? I must find some place now where I can go to hear the children sing the glories of the Blessed Child. Out of my own young days the strains still whisper in some corner of my memory, "God is man, man to deliver"—"Hark! a voice from yonder manger, Soft and sweet, doth entreat: Flee from woe and danger. Brethren, from all ills that grieve you You are freed; All you need I will surely give you." —There are other stanzas too—all of them full of forgiveness and peace and hope for the wretched and the fearful.

Oh, God, be good! Let me find a little place somewhere in the rear of the church and hear the rising tides of the organ mingle with the lights and the hymns and my tears and wash me clean in the assurance that Christ came for me. Here is a church and here a little place—there are no more seats to be had, and so I must stand between the tall pillars at the side. (The place makes me remember two men who went up into the temple to pray and only one knew enough about Christmas to say, "Be merciful.") But now the children sing,

Thou Christian heart, Whoe'er Thou art,
Be of good cheer and let no sorrow move thee!
For God's own Child, In mercy mild,
Joins thee to Him;—how grateful God must love thee!

This was truly it—

He opens us again the door
Of Paradise today;
The angel guards the gate no more
To God our thanks we pay.

How little understood! My sin—the dread despair which almost blinded me must now be put away. This child of mine—born to my loneliness, because I loved the father far too well and he now rests on some far beach in Normandy—will not yet see the love of this Beloved Child make his life easier and his burden light, but I shall know and I shall guard his faith and make him strong and good and on each Christmas Eve I shall be with him to remember and to see forgiveness coming down like lights and hymns to bless this unforgiving world. The night is strongly warm and hope shines like a star where I had seen no light before.

His Wonders to Perform

SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT and the remembrance again all over the world of the perfect workmanship of God in the set-

ting which He designed for the supreme event of history! The choir of angels breaks the stillness of the night only for a few shepherds. Only to this small group of unnamed men is it given to experience that "something is loosed to change our shaken world," and to be directed to the manger where the Child lay. A new day dawns in the relationship between God and man and its first rays shine round about lowly shepherds as they tend their flocks that night. Only the artistry of God can create a scene as simple as that for the opening of the final and greatest era of history and the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven. None but God is sublime enough to achieve this acme of majesty in simplicity. No love but the Love of God cradled in a manger is perfect enough to be felt in its full strength by the lowliest among men. When God acts to save the world, He touches the humblest human hearts with the gentle might of His mercy. He applies no power but the power of His love made manifest in the lowliness of the stable in Bethlehem and reflected in the radiant glory of the meek of the earth. And there is no greater force than that in earth, or sea, or sky.

Silent Night, Holy Night—we shall sing it again this Christmas across our stricken world and the words will mingle strangely with the angry noise and glare of our bombing skies. And the full meaning of it will be lost and its peace flash in our dark heavens like a falling star, unless our generation is captured by the love of Christmas and held by its saving power. The staggering might which men have manufactured for war and are using to achieve military victory cannot build the better world which men are envisioning. From across the centuries there comes again this Christmas the memory of that silent, holy night when God reached into history and into the hearts of the humble with the glory of His Love incarnate in the Christchild and there was light and hope and the promise of a new day. All the prospects of a brighter tomorrow will darken once more into disillusionment and our bravest plans for peace will crumble again, unless we build into them the indestructible beauty and lifting power of the Love that entered human life and destiny when Christ was born. Our bewildered and troubled generation must discover again the way of God to save the world and the majestic might of His equal love for all races and nations. This is the message and the promise of the silent, holy night which men can keep deep in their hearts at Christmas, 1944, and always.

THE ASTROLABE

BY

THEODORE GRAEBNER

A LETTER FROM STOKOWSKI TO CAMACHO

A dandy story comes from Mexico City recording the collision of Conductor Leopold Stokowski with the spirit of *Mañana.* The famous orchestra conductor had been engaged to direct the Mexican Philharmonic Orchestra on the national radio hour. Did the Mexican musicians get excited about playing under the baton of Stokowski? Not a bit! Neither did they change in the least their easygoing mode of life which in the case of Mexican musicians calls for tardiness of at least half an hour for concerts and of a full hour for rehearsals. When Stokowski was at his desk for an hour, about half of the orchestra was on hand for the rehearsal. At this point Mexican Composer Manuel M. Ponce walked down the aisle with the musical score of one of his compositions under his arm. When Stokowski asked to see the music, which was to have been played the following day, it was discovered that parts of the score were missing. This disclosure led to an argument in which all the artistic and racial intensity of the temperaments both of the conductor and the composer were given free rein. Stokowski proclaimed that he would not be able to rehearse the orchestra with an incomplete score, and he and Ponce argued, first in French, then in Spanish. At the height of the quarrel Ponce suddenly turned his back and strode out of the auditorium. Several of the members of the orchestra packed up their instruments and followed him.

Somehow, the broadcast came

off, but Mr. Stokowski wrote a letter to the president of the republic, Manuel Avila Camacho, suggesting certain changes which must come in the habits of musicians and composers of Mexico if that state is to achieve its musical destiny.

CASE OF THE RECORD TURNERS

We are not as much interested in the final settlement of difficulties which the record turners have had in their organization as we are interested in the light which is cast on organized music by this incident. Now that Petrillo has brought to their knees the great recording companies, which now have agreed to pay royalties to the musicians whose performances make up the transcriptions, the question of *who shall turn the records* at public presentations of such recordings rises up to plague the Musicians' Union. It was argued by the union of concert and theater technicians that the business of turning these records belongs in their field of duties. On the other hand, the musicians countered with the argument that the record should be turned by a professional musician since it requires expert musical knowledge to do this job properly.

Amusing incidents have developed out of this demand of the record turning section of the American Federation of Labor. In Chicago the American Federation of Musicians stopped the music—of all places—at the Congress of Industrial Organizations convention; this in spite of the fact that "union" songs were being played and that the occasion was a C. I. O. war relief exhibit. While the records were being played, representatives of the musicians union appeared and demanded the music be stopped. It was—without argument. To a newspaper man, Edward A. Benkert, secretary of the A.F.M.'s Chicago local, explained there was no union record turner at the phonograph. He said the union has an agreement with Chicago hotels that such a person must be around when recorded music is played.

Reminding us of a recent civic gathering in St. Louis which was opened without the singing by the audience of the national anthem because the Musicians' Union demanded a fee of six dollars for one of their members to appear on the stage and play one stanza of "Oh Say, Can You See."

Don't understand me to say that there is no justification for a uniting of musicians into guilds or unions. But the formation of guilds to protect the rightful interests of musical performers is

one thing, and the imbibing of a trades union spirit by an artistic profession is another. The uniting of craftsmen into labor organizations has deeply injured the art of the sculptor and the worker in bronz, even of the stone mason, and architecture is paying the cost. Today all of America can afford only two or three cathedrals that measure up to the standards of old world church-building. Only by reason of the freedom of the spirit of the artists was it possible to dot Western Europe and the British Isles with great churches in such number that no man would be able to encompass even one-tenth of these great structures in a long lifetime of study. You will get a faint idea of what I mean if you will read Ruskin's *Seven Lamps of Architecture* or Adams' *Mont Saint Michel and Chartres.*

THE LAYMAN AND THE CATHEDRAL

In the November issue of THE CRESSET Pastor Kretzmann gave us eight pages of very unusual photographs of medieval English churches. These cathedrals and abbey churches of England and Western Europe are undoubtedly to be rated among the greatest achievements of the human mind. As architecture, only the temples of Thebes in ancient Egypt offer anything of equal sublimity. In their combination of design and embellishment there is nothing elsewhere in the world to compare with these masterpieces of medieval Gothic. The builders who preceded the Gothic masters reared great and impressive monuments to the faith, but these bore the imprint of the great ecclesiastical machine which ruled both the state and the church in those days. Go to Lombardy in Northern Italy and observe how the altar and the priesthood are placed on a high elevation in the remote end of the church, high above the heads of the laity, inaccessible, as God was made inaccessible except through priestly ministration by the hierarchy. Then came the Gothic style, which was not a monument to the priestly and episcopal power, but was the expression of an unsatisfied longing for spiritual religion. For the first time we find this upward, aspiring quality which has never been expressed in poetry or prose or in pictorial art as it was expressed by the Gothic church with its spiritualizing of masses, its yearning desire for light. The priests had made the altar with its consecrated host central and raised it from the floor. The layman placed it on the level, gave the lines an upward tendency throughout, opened the windows

to the light. The dead wall vanished, pillars and mullions became the architectural elements. There is no mere decoration nor any dead masses. The whole structure lives, and the light, filtered through stained glass, the sound of organ and bells, the odor of incense, not to speak of the mystic beauty of vestments and altar coverings, all tend to envelop the soul in that inexpressible flood of religious sentiment which was evoked by the Christian elements of the Roman system but which was not satisfied by them.

It is an amazing thing to consider that such masterpieces of architecture could have been worked out on a cooperative basis by craftsmen under a series of master builders. Many of these churches were built in an outburst of fervor by the populace with all the zeal of a crusade. People cut and hauled massive blocks of stone from the quarries to the site of the church. The builders of Chartres lived in mud huts. That didn't bother them. They all felt they shared in the glory of the magnificent cathedral which they had helped to build.

The stained glass which was still *in situ* before the first world war in the Sainte Chapelle in Paris, at Chartres and at Amiens dated from the 14th century, and these windows are probably the finest in the world. The reds and blues are gorgeous, and when you recall that the artisans used red hot irons to cut the pieces to fit together in the windows, you get some idea of the infinite patience required of the craftsmen.

Many years ago James Russell Lowell visited Chartres and wrote his impressions in a poem, "The Cathedral." He tells of standing before the northern entrance under the statues of saints and kings where

Stern faces bleared with immemorial watch,
Looked down benignly grave and seemed to say,
"Ye come and go incessant; we remain
Safe in the hallowed quiets of the past;
Be reverent, ye who flit and are forgot,
Of faith so nobly realized as this."

BASIC ENGLISH COMES TO PLAGUE MR. CHURCHILL

Basic English is the English language stripped down to 800 words. You may have seen the list. By means of these 800 words business men in Peru and in Mozambique are enabled to carry on a crude sort of correspondence with firms in England or with British officials. And it is no doubt the commercial advantages of making a language of so limited a vocabulary a means of

doing business with Great Britain that caused Mr. Winston Churchill to pronounce his approval of Basic English.

Miss Marcia Winn, a Chicago correspondent of the *Kansas City Star,* has obtained some entertaining results from her answer to the question: What would happen to Mr. Churchill if his moving words were reduced to his beloved Basic English? She took up a volume of Churchill speeches entitled, *Blood, Sweat and Tears.* She takes the quotation from which the book derives its title, "I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat." Basic English does not contain the word "toil" nor the word "tears" nor the word "sweat." Accordingly, in Basic English Mr. Churchill would have said: "I have nothing to offer but blood, work, water from the eyes, and water from the skin." The speech addressed to the American people was concluded by Mr. Churchill with the well-known sentences: "We shall not fall or falter; we shall not weaken or tire.... Give us the tools and we will finish the job." Using the substitutes which alone are available in Basic English for the forceful phrasing of this appeal under the blitz, this is what he would have said: "We shall not make error or stop a little; we shall not grow weak or tired. . . . Give us the things and we will end the work."

Winston Churchill is master of the English language both in its Anglo-Saxon element and in his use of resounding words of Latin origin. He uses words of color and mystery and force. What do you suppose got into his head when he became the strongest backer of Basic English?

WHEN THE COWS MEWED GOODBYE

You may have received circulars from the firms, generally with New York addresses, who offer to give you "song service"—by which is meant an appreciation of the poetry you will send them, if you enclose a fee. The advertisement gives people the impression that these song servicers are pining for good songs to publish or market. The truth is they have learned that vanity is good for a profit. It took the Better Business Bureau to try out these specialists in modern poetry by sending to some of their offices the most atrocious excuse for poetry it has been possible to conjure out of a normal mind. This is a poem which the National Better Business Bureau sent to the song servicers:

A Lonely Soldier's Lament

When we said good by by the silo
After milking time at time of eve
(evening)

Sadly you did cry and petted poor fido
As I did march away in khaki sleeve,
The cows mewed good by, the chores were all done,
As I turned and marched away to Washington.

CHORUS

I'm lonely and blue at the stage door canteen
And my sergeant is nasty and mean,
The hostesses are nice but you are very much nicer
You are my little de-icer,
Some day we will squash the heinies
With the British, Russians, Brazilmen, and Chinese,
Someday I'll come back soon maybe
And we will settle down and build a home and have a baby.

The reaction came by return mail from the firms who for a fee were willing to set this atrocity to music and furnish printed copies to the poet. For example, one concern accepted it as "having distinct novelty and originality . . . it should make a beautiful and appealing song which people would love to sing, whistle and remember." ($30, kindly, for music and professional copies.)

Other comments were: ". . . have examined material and find the contents excellent." ($40 for services.) ". . . after careful consideration pleased to inform you of my acceptance." ($20 plus 25% of royalties.) ". . . pleased to announce acceptance of your song . . . glad to complete this number into a beautiful commercial song . . . we have in mind for this song an extensive publicity campaign . . ." ($60 prior to publication.) Song accepted "as it contains an excellent theme for a war-time love ballad and when set to music should make a splendid song. We receive very few lyrics that are as inspired and well written as yours and I would like to commend you on your lyric writing ability. You have real talent . . ."

Natural modesty prevented the NBBB from quoting more of the effusions received from the sharks.

Little Gems for the Little Child

"Mine eyes have seen Thy Salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a Light to lighten the Gentiles and the Glory of Thy people Israel." ST. LUKE 2:30-32

With the coming of the active Gothic age, with its deeply religious spirit, the ivory-carvers were kept busily employed in picturing the Biblical stories, with scenes of the Passion, pietas, saints and martyrs. During this period and until the XV century all art was in the service of the Church, and every object devoted to religious rites was lavished with decoration. Ivory was used largely for all ecclesiastical uses as well as for articles employed in private devotions. There were, in this latter group, liturgical combs, triptychs and diptychs, statuettes, shrines, benitiers, book-covers, and the many lesser things demanded by that devotional age. These devotional objects were carried as talismans on voyages, used on their long crusades, or employed in their households, no sleeping room being without its shrine, whose shutters were opened only at times of prayer. Wrought with great devotion they must have exercised wide influence as teachers of the Bible stories in those devout ages. Today these heirlooms of the centuries, carved with all the leading events in Biblical history, excite our admiration for the great, creative (but nameless) artists.

These little scenes (note that their size is about the size of a small book) are rare tributes to the Holy Child and the Virgin Mother. In some homes, and, on some far battle-front, these little pictures of the little hand-carved ivories will be a gentle reminder to return in spirit to the lowly place at Bethlehem and worship Him "Who is our Peace."

A DEVOTIONAL DIPTYCH

The Annunciation

8x7¾ inches

A DEVOTIONAL TRIPTYCH

The Adoration of the Wise Men with Side Scenes of the Nativity and Circumcision

7¼x9½ inches

Madonna, Infant Christ, St. Joseph and One of the Wise Men In Adoration

XIV Century 8 inches

Madonna and Infant Christ

XIII Century 10¾ inches

Madonna and Infant Christ

XIV Century 14½ inches

A DEVOTIONAL TRIPTYCH

Madonna and Infant Christ with St. Joseph and St. John

7x4¾ inches

A DEVOTIONAL DIPTYCH

The Nativity and the Adoration of the Magi

7x9 1/3 inches

Music AND MUSIC MAKERS

Music and Personalities

BY WALTER A. HANSEN

Every person has a personality. That's a trite statement, isn't it? What prevents us from drawing from it the equally trite conclusion that tonal suggestions of persons are, in the very nature of things, tonal suggestions of personalities? Nothing.

Can composers write music which suggests personalities? Can a great master compose a piece which, without verbal hints of any kind, will indicate to you how Little Jack Horner lived, moved, and had his being? Can he indite a symphonic poem which, without benefit of program notes, will conjure up in your mind, and in the minds of all listeners a true-to-life—or even a false-to-life—picture of Socrates or John Milton or Billy the Kid or the woodman who spared that tree?

Aaron Copland's *Billy the Kid* is a ballet. Scenery, costumes, and choregraphy come to the aid of the music; but don't forget that the music, in its own inimitable way, comes to the aid of scenery, costumes, and choregraphy. *Billy the Kid* is a work abounding in vitality and incisiveness. When you see and hear it presented on the stage, you're able to manufacture for yourself a somewhat hazy picture of the notorious outlaw; but would you think automatically of Billy the Kid if you were to listen to the music apart from its context and without knowing what its title is? No. Must you conclude, then, that Mr. Copland gave birth to an out-and-out fizzle when he wrote the orchestral portion of the ballet? No. The simple truth is that Mr. Copland didn't even attempt to give us a foolproof tonal description of the personality of Billy the Kid.

What about Sir Edward Elgar's *Enigma Variations?* Well, I'll tell you a secret. It's an autobiograph-

ical secret. Maybe it's altogether valueless. I had heard the *Enigma Variations* many times before I read the program notes. Don't ask me why I hadn't paid any heed whatever to the commentaries. Maybe I had been too lazy to do so. At any rate I had taken keen pleasure in the famous Englishman's composition even though I didn't know what was in it or what was behind it. I admired the cunning with which the variations are constructed—especially the orchestral cunning—in spite of the fact that I had declared again and again that, in my own worthless opinion, much of Sir Edward's music—and even some portions of the *Enigma Variations*—smelled strongly of the lamp. Then one fine day I read what the composer had said about the *Enigma Variations*. Here are his words:

> It is true that I have sketched, for their amusement and mine, the idiosyncrasies of fourteen of my friends, not necessarily musicians; but this is a personal matter and need not have been mentioned publicly. The *Variations* should stand simply as a "piece" of music. The *Enigma* I will not explain—its "dark saying" must be left unguessed, and I warn you that the apparent connection between the *Variations* and the theme is often of the slightest texture; further, through and over the whole set another and larger theme "goes" but is not played. . . . So the principal theme never appears, even as in some late dramas—e.g., Maeterlinck's *L'Intruse* and *Les Sept Princesses:* the chief character is never on the stage.

Fourteen Personalities

What was the result? Well, after I had learned—somewhat belatedly—what was *in* and *behind* the *Enigma Variations,* I tried in the sweat of my brow to give the music free rein in its well-meant attempt to suggest fourteen personalities. What happened? Whenever I put forth the effort—and let me assure you that it always was a determined effort—to see personality pictures or find character sketches of Alice Elgar, H. D. Steuart-Powell, R. B. Townshend, W. Neath Baker, R. P. Arnold, Miss Isabel Fitton (Ysobel), Arthur Troyte Griffith, Miss Winifred Norbury, A. J. Jaeger (Nimrod), Dora Penny (Dorabella), George R. Sinclair, Basil Nevinson, and Lady Mary Trefusis as I listened to the music, I failed dismally and hopelessly. I admit that a brief quotation from Mendelssohn's *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage* in the fourteenth variation led me to guess that Lady Mary may have been a person who was fond of indulging in sea travel; but all my intensive cerebrating couldn't take me beyond that one somewhat inconsequential point.

Therefore I decided to dismiss all thoughts of personality sketches when listening to the *Enigma Variations,* and I have adhered to that decision with the utmost faithfulness. Today I like to think of the *Enigma Variations* as a deftly scored enigma—an enigma, mind you, in the true sense of the word. Maybe your experience has been different—or will be different.

I prefer to listen to Richard Strauss's *Don Quixote* without trying to find in it character sketches of Don Quixote, Dulcinea, and Sancho Panza. In like manner, I choose to hear Strauss's *Don Juan* without racking my brain in a futile effort to see in my mind's eye a picture of an ardent and selfish Lothario who, in the end, falls prey to utter disgust. *Till Eulenspiegel,* however, affects me in a radically different way. It's fun for me to concoct my own program for that work, and I hasten to say that I don't always devise the same program. Strauss himself has told us:

> It is impossible for me to provide a program to *Eulenspiegel;* were I to put into words the thoughts which its several incidents suggest to me, they would seldom suffice and might give rise to offense. Let me leave it, therefore, to my hearers to crack the hard nut which the Rogue has prepared for them.

Ein Heldenleben, likewise from the pen of Strauss, has a magic all its own. It's the magic of wonderful scoring combined with the magic of unusually sharp suggestion. No, I don't look upon *Ein Heldenleben* as Strauss's finest composition. Not at all. Nevertheless, everything I know about *Ein Heldenleben* causes me to think of Strauss as a man who sets great store by his outstanding ability and is, in point of fact, a mighty hero in his own estimation. In addition, the work, filled though it is with excellent craftsmanship and cleverly concatenated quotations from Strauss's own compositions, invariably forces me to exclaim, "Richard Strauss is a man who *used to be* a great composer!" I'm sure that Strauss is still a good businessman. Similar conclusions dance to and fro in my head whenever I lend my ears—as I frequently do—to the *Sinfonia Domestica,* which, as you know, has to do with Strauss's family life.

King Solomon

Ernest Bloch had King Solomon in mind when he wrote his *Schelomo: Hebrew Rhapsody for 'Cello and Orchestra.* Long before Bloch's time Handel, Carl Goldmark, and Gounod had been inspired to write brilliantly and somewhat pompously about that wise, mighty, and fabulously wealthy monarch; but Bloch, ac-

cording to some astute commentators, undertook to suggest a picture of the famous king as one who, after tasting power and pleasure in profuse abundance, finally concluded that all is vanity. Guido M. Gatti, writing in *La Critica Musicale* of April-May, 1920, found in the work "the founder of the Great Temple" and "the creation of phantasmagorical entourage of persons and scenes in rapid and kaleidoscopic succession." Gatti continued:

> The violoncello, with its ample breadth of phrasing, now melodic and with moments of superb lyricism, now declamatory and with robustly dramatic lights and shades, lends itself to a reincarnation of Solomon in all his glory, surrounded by his thousand wives and concubines, with his multitude of slaves and warriors behind him. His voice resounds in the devotional silence, and the sentences of his wisdom sink into the heart as the seed into a fertile soil: "Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher. . . . all is vanity. What profit hath a man of all his labor which he taketh under the sun? One generation passeth away; but the earth abideth for ever. . . . He that increaseth increaseth sorrow."

Hector Berlioz' *Harold in Italy,* in which the solo viola impersonates the hero, doesn't deserve the neglect into which conductors and audiences have let it slip. It's a symphony in the following four movements: "Harold in the Mountains," "March of the Pilgrims," "Mountaineer's Serenade," and "Brigand's Orgy." Berlioz' *Symphonie Fantastique* is played far more frequently than his *Harold in Italy.* It deals with the dreams and visions of a desperately lovesick musician under the influence of opium. You can't divorce those dreams and those visions from the personality of that musician, can you?

Tchaikovsky's *Manfred,* based on Lord Byron's poem with the same title, is an important work. Shall we call it a tonal suggestion of a strange personality? The composer has given us the following verbal exposition of the composition:

> Manfred wanders in the Alps; though possessed of occult knowledge, with which he can subject the powers of darkness to his will, nothing can make him forget his love for the beautiful Astarte, and nothing can lift the curse which lies heavily on Manfred's soul, which, unceasingly and without truce, delivers him to the tortures of the most grievous despair.

Can you overlook the Sultan Schahriar and the the Sultana Scheherazade when you listen to Rimsky-Korsakoff's gorgeously orchestrated symphonic suite entitled *Scheherazade?* Sindbad the Sailor plays a prominent role in that work, and the Kalandar Prince relates an exciting tale. In

addition, a young prince and a young princess, who "were the likest of all folk, each to other, as they were twins or an only brother and sister," have their beautiful say.

In Moussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* you'll meet Samuel Goldenburg, a rich and overbearing Polish Jew, and Schmuyle, who fawns and cringes without gaining anything at all.

One of Debussy's *Préludes* for the piano has the title "General Lavine—Eccentric." It's full of fun—genuine Debussyan fun. I'm sure the composer didn't want it to be regarded as a character sketch.

One could go on almost interminably. Dozens of personalities, big and little, have inspired dozens of composers, big and little, to write music. Little composers often try to sketch personalities with what they think is foolproof accuracy; big composers know that music can merely *suggest* personalities. Furthermore, big composers are keenly aware of the value of program notes. Unfortunately, they don't always provide us with expository helps. Then commentators, big and little, take the floor. You needn't believe everything those commentators say. Put your own imagination to work; but let's not confuse our own divagations with what actually went on in the minds of the composers when they wrote. Let's bear in mind that there are many, many more kinds of personalities among listeners than one can ever discover in compositions. That's one reason why there's so much fun in listening carefully and in comparing our reactions.

RECENT RECORDINGS

RICHARD WAGNER. "'Immolation Scene," from *Die Götterdämmerung*. The NBC Symphony Orchestra under Arturo Toscanini with Helen Traubel, soprano. "Liebestod," from *Tristan und Isolde*.—A superb presentation of one of the most magnificent of the many magnificent scenes in the *Ring*. The orchestra plays with glowing beauty of tone, and Miss Traubel proves once again that she is a Brünnhilde to the manner born. To hear the "Liebestod" performed under Toscanini's direction is an unforgetable experience. Victor Album 978. $3.68.

ANTONIO VIVALDI. *Sonata in D*, arranged by Ottorino Respighi. Erica Morini, violinist, with Max Lanner at the piano.—Miss Morini sets forth the rich beauty of a fine composition with masterful technical skill and sterling musicianship. Victor disc 11-8671. $1.05.

The Literary Scene

READ NOT TO CONTRADICT AND CONFUTE—NOR TO BELIEVE AND TAKE FOR GRANTED—BUT TO WEIGH AND CONSIDER

All unsigned reviews are by members of the staff

Refreshing Reading

THE AMERICAN CHARACTER. By D. W. Brogan. Alfred A. Knopf, New York. 1944. 169 pages. $2.50.

IT has long been customary for most citizens of the United States of America and for many Europeans, Asiatics, Australians, and Africans to speak of this great and mighty country of ours as *America*. Latin Americans, of course, are prone to resent that way of talking, and many Canadians become equally impatient when they hear the word *America* applied to only a portion of the vast western Hemisphere. To them it is a bit presumptuous to use the name *America* and the name *United States of America* interchangeably.

Sticklers for accuracy will find fault with D. W. Brogan for calling his refreshing book about our nation and its people *The American Character*. No one can deny them their right to do so. An analysis of many of the thoughts, ways, aspirations, virtues, and defects characteristic of the inhabitants of the United States should, it seems to them, be labeled with unmistakable precision.

Be that as it may, Mr. Brogan has bent both knees to a custom of long standing even though neither the title nor the contents of his engrossing book mean any harm at all. Must we not admit that it is good for our hearts and our minds to learn what an outsider thinks of us —in spite of the none-too-pleasant fact that our neighbors to the north and to the south are inclined to foam at the mouth or spit fire when we of the United States are spoken of as *Americans* in such an unjustifiably restricted use of the word?

Mr. Brogan is a forty-four-year-old Scotchman who was educated at the University of Glasgow, at Oxford, and at Harvard. He specialized in what is commonly known as the history of America, and he spent much time in many parts of our land. He observed things, events, tendencies and human beings with uncommon keenness. In numerous instances he saw far beneath the surface, and, as a rule, he was able to arrive at conclusions which are either incontestably correct or at least worthy in every respect of careful, protracted, and dispassionate consideration.

We are flattered when we read that, in Mr. Brogan's painstakingly evolved opinion, the United States is "the most interesting country in the world," and we are drenched with an exhilarating feeling of pride—not vanity, mind you—when we follow him as he puts his distinctly Scotch sense of economy and, shall we say, his Irish wit to work in his book. He presents us with a succinct and genuinely valuable résumé of our history and speaks convincingly and, at times, brilliantly of the temper—a composite temper, let it be understood—which came into being, had its important say, and accomplished its significant deeds as a direct and always tangible result of the struggles in which the founders of our nation were forced to mold themselves, their land, and their descendants. It is "the temper of the pioneer, the temper of the gambler, the temper of the booster, the temper of the discounter of the future who is to some extent bound to be a disparager of the past." The Civil War, thinks the author of *The American Character,* had more to do with making our country what it is today than anything else.

Mr. Brogan writes about politics in the United States, about education, about sports, about business, and about many other aspects of what he—and hundreds more, let it be said—are in the habit of designating as the *American* way of living, moving, and having one's being. He covers a large amount of territory; but, just as a kangaroo skims over great sections of *terra firma* when hopping from spot to spot, so Mr. Brogan either misses or overlooks this or that when he glides wittily and wisely over the United States and its people. Since his readers want to be as fair to him as he tries to be to the United States, they will realize that he himself is completely —and maybe a wee bit painfully— aware of the existence of much of what he has left untouched.

In a brilliantly conceived chapter entitled "The American Way in War" Mr. Brogan declares:

> For Americans, war is almost all of the time a nuisance, and military skill a luxury like Mah-Jongg. But when the issue is brought home to them, war becomes as important, for the necessary period, as business or sport. And it is hard to decide which is likely to be the more ominous for the Axis—an American decision that this war is sport, or that it is business.

The Good Earth

YOUNG 'UN. By Herbert Best. The Macmillan Company, New York. 1944. 271 pages. $2.50.

OLD Zeph Post was angry and disgruntled. Settler! The trader had called *him* a settler.

> Why, he'd scouted through this land, trapped and hunted over it, kept tight aholt of his scalp, seen these very Falls, before there'd been a sawmill on the river or a fat-bellied trader in the whole countryside.

Rumbling behind his beard like a dog afraid to bark outright, Zeph timidly began the serious business of selecting "Spring vittles" for his family. Times were hard, and his credit was short. When Zeph started the long, hard haul homeward a few

hours later, his sled held only half of what was actually needed to carry his family over until the new crops were ready for harvest in the autumn.

Showed what things was coming to. Men and women would keep a-coming and keep-a-coming now, with nothing to hinder them. There had come to be more folks than the country could hold, he could see that now. So, 'stead of being able to live on what the Good Lord had provided in lake and stream and forest, they had to fell, and draw rocks and wash potash, to plough and everlastingly to hoe.

Zeph's thoughts went back to the time when he had been free, when he had roamed the north woods, hunting, trapping, and "taking his living" from the countryside. That was before he had met Ma. From the very first Ma wanted land and a cabin.

Then Eldest was born and Ma stayed poorly quite a while. Dan'l and Young-'un followed in the years, and Ma took worse with her falling spells. And here was Zeph Post, caught by the paws in a trap, without the courage to break loose account of the way it would pain.

A few days later Zeph Post, tired, bewildered, and numbed by shock, stood and gazed in silent agony at the smoke-blackened clearing where his house and barn had been. His silence held when the frightened children came out of the woods and told him that on the first day of his absence Ma, "taken with one of her spells," had driven them from the house. When the children came home in the early dusk, it had been too late to help Ma or to save any of their possessions. There was nothing left of the barn and cabin but gray ash and glowing embers. Zeph listened but said nothing.

He stood for a middling while, not taking his eyes off the ashes that had been his wife and home. Then he sighed, slung on his bag and powder horn, and turned about. Dan'l made to follow. But his Pa said, "Stay there, son." And Old Man Post just walked off northward into the forest.

Trained to obey orders without questioning or hesitation, Dan'l accepted his father's words as a direct and binding command. *Young 'un* is the engrossing account of the adventures which befell Dan'l and his sisters in their desperate struggle to hold their little farm and to wrest from it a sparse livelihood. It is the story of Eldest, who was "rising seventeen" and very much in love with Preacher; of Dan'l, not yet sixteen, proud, silent, stubborn, overworked, and grimly determined to "make out someways until Pa came back"; and of gay, unspoiled, and irrepressible Young 'un. It is Young 'un who brings warmth, charm, and gayety to Herbert Best's fine novel of early nineteenth-century pioneer life. Young 'un typifies the indomitable spirit of the adventuresome pioneers who blazed new trails and established new frontiers.

THE British-born author of *Young 'un* describes his book as a by-product of the once abandoned acres which he and his American wife, Erick Berry, have transformed into a prosperous and productive farmland. The Best home, situated halfway up the southern slope of a forested hillside in a remote corner of

upper New York State, commands a magnificent view. Here Mr. Best and his wife, a well-known writer and illustrator, live in happy, contented seclusion; here they walk the woodland trail which Young 'un and her neighbors traveled to and from Cold Brook in a bygone day.

Young 'un, a Book-of-the-Month Club selection for November, clearly reflects the author's extensive research into the folk lore of the period of which he writes. He knows how the men and women of that period lived, worked, and thought; and he has acquired a working knowledge of the crafts and the crude implements which were an important part of pioneer life. The timeless beauty of the good earth and the age-old conflict of man against man and man against nature are depicted with hardy realism, intuitive sympathy, and refreshing simplicity.

Picaresque

RIDE WITH ME. By Thomas B. Costain. Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc. New York. 1944. 595 pages. $3.00.

RIDE WITH ME is a historical novel of the Napoleonic era covering roughly the whole continent of Europe and the British Isles during the years from 1805 to 1828. The characters of the book furnishing the romantic interest are fictitious, but a host of other "main characters" were real persons: Sir Robert Wilson or "Riding Bobby," from whom the novel's title was derived, the Duke of Wellington, Dumouriez, Walter Scott, Horne Tooke, the Lavalettes, La Bellilote, one of Napoleon's mistresses, Michael Bruce, Kutuzov, and Marshall Ney, to name a few.

Frank Ellery, a young English publisher, meets glamorous Gabrielle de Salle, a French refugee, in a fog on page one. He falls in love with her but does not declare his affection until page 301. This delay of three hundred pages and several years is not caused by indifference, shyness, or lassitude on Frank's part. It is just that there are so many more important issues at stake: the matter of arousing England to prepare to defend herself against Bonaparte, the matter of giving Spain assistance, the matter of a free press (for which cause he served a sentence in prison), the matter of prison reform. These are the larger problems. Other obstacles in the path of his true love are: his selfish mother working for his politically ambitious brother, Caradoc; threatened financial disaster for his newspaper, the *Tablet;* not to mention Gabrielle's other suitors, including Caradoc.

Frank goes to the Peninsula as the first war correspondent, fights with Sir Robert Wilson against Napoleon's forces, and returns to England just in time to help Gabrielle and her sister Margot escape to France. Their brother had been caught spying. In France Gabrielle becomes an enthusiastic Bonapartist, much to her Loyalist sister's disgust. She marries the stupid Comte de Vitrelle and accompanies him to Russia at the time of Napoleon's advance on Moscow. The Comte deserts her when the Cossacks turn the advance into a French rout. Ellery follows Gabrielle

to Russia and helps her escape back to France. Gabby is still such an ardent admirer of *L'Empereur* that she insists he won a great victory. When Frank argues to the contrary, she tells him he is absurd, and he agrees with her. He adores her blindly, in spite of everything she thinks, believes in, says, or does. Her beautiful face and figure make him forget the hardships he went through to arouse England against Napoleon, even make him forget that he himself was wounded while fighting the Frenchman.

After the battle of Waterloo and the restoration of Louis XVIII, Margot becomes established in Paris with the redeemed wealth of her father, while Gabrielle involves herself in more dangers by flaunting her admiration for the exiled Bonaparte and deliberately antagonizing the King. Though his mind tells him that Margot is the better of the two sisters, Frank cannot dismiss Gabrielle from his heart. It would be unfair to disclose more of the romantic events of the novel.

This novel is of particular interest today for the reader who likes to make comparisons between the past and present, or those who feel that history repeats itself—with variations. Certain parallels can be drawn between the Napoleonic era and the Hitler era: the lethargy of people to impending danger, the invasion of Russia, atrocities committed by the invader, reasons for the leader's magnetized following. None of these is stated, yet the author's choice of details, facts, and events suggests that a subtle comparison was intended.

Mr. Costain has written a good book. He not only tells a good story, but he injects a wealth of details about the habits, customs, dress, and attitudes of the people of England and France in this period without burdening the reader with dull exposition. According to a statement by the author, between four and five hundred books were consulted in the preparation of this tome. We think the result was worth the effort.

JESSIE SWANSON

For Youth

THERE WERE TWO OF US. By Vera Maynard Osborn. McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York. 1944. 327 pages. $2.50.

ALTHOUGH 327 pages seems long, this book is very fast reading. The type is large and well-spaced, the margins are not scanty. In times of paper shortage when efforts are made to make a 300-page book fit 200 pages, these seemingly trivial items bear mentioning. For these reasons, as well as for the type of book it is, *There Were Two of Us* is a good book to read in bed. You may wish to present it to a convalescent (after reading it yourself, of course).

Mrs. Osborn has written her memoirs, though they are hardly as scandalous as that word implies. She tells in a light, amusing manner the story of a middle-class Middle West family as they lived and grew up fifty years ago. From the time when they were too young to talk plainly until they finished college and married (two other people, naturally) she and her brother had felt a close bond of

love and companionship. This does not imply that they were model children who did not quarrel, pull hair, get into mischief, and worry their parents. They did all of these things, yet they were so close to each other that they frequently read each other's thoughts.

Although the book abounds in humorous incident, it is not shallow. There is a quiet understanding of Youth, its ambitions, victories, trials, and disappointments.

JESSIE SWANSON

Disgusting

TRAGIC GROUND. By Erskine Caldwell. Duell, Sloan and Pearce, New York. 1944. 237 pages. $2.50.

ERSKINE CALDWELL'S new novel is mentioned here only because, having read *Tragic Ground,* this reviewer feels impelled to give expression to vigorous protest. Mr. Caldwell is indisputably a gifted writer. Some of his short stories are superb and entirely worthy of the enthusiastic praise contained in Henry Seidel Canby's brilliant introduction to the book, *Short Stories by Erskine Caldwell,* which appeared in the late summer of 1944. *Tobacco Road,* in spite of its profanity, its vile language, and its ugly story, could be regarded as a social document, as an indictment designed to shock us into an awareness of the distressing social conditions which exist among the poor whites of the deep South. No such argument can be advanced in defense of *Tragic Ground.* Here Mr. Caldwell, in a manner wholly unworthy of his fine talent, ruthlessly plows what is in truth *tragic* ground. Poverty, decadence, economic and moral degradation, wartime dislocations, and an alarming rise in juvenile delinquency are real and pressing problems in our national life. Nor can we escape the realization that our returning servicemen will examine once familiar scenes with critical eyes and with new understanding of the forces which build or destroy a people. Undoubtedly we are inclined to be somewhat regional-minded and to concern ourselves only with what lies at our own doorstep. Very often we need to be sharply reminded of the larger pattern of our responsibilities. Can *Tragic Ground* effectively pierce the armorplate of indifference and intolerance? Is it designed to counteract the prejudice and the misunderstanding which set class against class and race against race? No. The sordid story of Douthitt Spence and the squatter community of Poor Boy is a brutal and insolent travesty of a delicate theme—sickening in its implications, nauseating because of its obscene language.

Roman Choir

THE CONDUCTOR RAISES HIS BATON. By William J. Finn. Harper & Bros., New York. 1944. 289 pages. $3.75.

TO those music lovers who have long followed Father Finn's work as an exponent of the choral art, this most recent and perhaps the best of his works on conducting will be a welcome addition to their libraries.

It is not a book on conducting of

the usual type that one ordinarily reads, for in it Father Finn strives to explode traditional fetishes that have long held sway on the concert platform as well as in the chancel. Likewise he exposes the purposeless showmanship of insincere, glory-seeking, third-rate maestros.

The entire approach of Father Finn's presentation is one of sincere scholarship, tempered by lofty emotion as well as an appreciation of practical considerations. That this is his approach is very much in evidence from his treatment of tempo. Strict adherence to traditional tempo under certain conditions renders performance to none effect. "The 'Miserere' of Allegri with its celebrated abbellimenti needs less *rallentando* and *accelerando* as a psalm at Tenebrae in church where the drama is supplied by the liturgy, than as a straightforward musical item on an a cappella program."—"The whole aesthetic concept of a composition, its *raison d'etre,* may be destroyed by a rigorous, pietistic insistence on any detail of interpretation which is unsuited to the physical circumstances of a particular performance."

This illustration is only one of many that could be given to show that Father Finn gives an extremely satisfying discussion of all the problems encountered by the conductor, be he choral, orchestral, or both. It is the sincere hope of this reviewer that this book will find its way into the libraries of all colleges and conservatories and that many teachers of conducting will see fit to use this volume, if not as a text book, at least as a supplement to the standard works on conducting. It goes far beyond the ordinary discussion of the technique of conducting.

M. Alfred Bichsel

Chaplain's Story

GOD ON A BATTLEWAGON. By Captain James V. Claypool. The John C. Winston Company. Philadelphia. 1944. 110 pages. $1.50.

Captain Claypool is a chaplain in the United States Naval Reserve. The story he tells was recorded by Carl Wiegman and was first published in a series of articles by the *Chicago Tribune.* The style is straightforward —journalistic rather than pious.

Most of the events in this small, thin volume concern Captain Claypool's work on the *Battleship X,* now known to be the *South Dakota,* whose skipper was Rear Admiral Thomas Leigh Gatch, affectionately called "Gunpowder Gatch" by his men and termed "an officer, a gentleman, and a Christian," by Claypool. The narrative begins with the battle of October 26, 1942, with the Japs east of the Solomon Islands and continues through the fall of 1943. This is not a book on religion; it is a book on life. The part that God plays on a battlewagon is not spectacular and set apart. It is an integral part of the life of the ship. As the author says, "It is different in the Navy, where religion is not a perfunctory matter. It is constantly in the thoughts of many men." Another time he expresses the same feeling by quoting Commander James J. Hughes:

The Navy believes in organized re-

ligion. Men have to have something in their heads. If they don't have religion. superstition rushes to fill the vacuum. Such men are like a sailing ship without a rudder, elated and depressed without reason. They don't stand up under fire. In the Navy, we take along religion as we take along ammunition.

In addition to conducting Sunday services, burials, and memorials, the chaplain also serves as a counselor to his men on personal problems. Many of these concern wives, sweethearts, or just women in general. Some are emotional problems, and some are intellectual questions. One of the interesting chapters concerns the chaplain's own problems, chiefly pacifist vs. militarist or the reconciliation of killing with Christianity.

The book also contains sixteen full-page photographs.

JESSIE SWANSON

What the Peace-Makers Must Face

THE COMING STRUGGLE FOR PEACE. By Andre Visson. The Viking Press, New York. 1944. 301 pages. $3.00.

WITH the war now in its sixth year we observe increasing intensification of the offensive on one side, and desperate tenacity of resistance on the other. However, it is also becoming more obvious that after the victory by the Allied Nations the world will face stupendous problems of readjustment. Mere samples of these problems are evidenced by the development of the Polish situation, the controversy about the reconstitution of France, the Dumbarton Oaks Conference and the difficulties encountered by the present Civil Aeronautics Conference. These are but a few instances which indicate the many vital and far-reaching situations which will confront those who will sit at the peace table after the operations on the battle fields have come to an end.

In this volume the author presents a vivid picture of the postwar world, externally disorganized and internally disrupted and shattered, which now awaits rebuilding. He traces historically the issues which have led to the pre-war conditions and which have become causal factors of this war especially in Europe and Asia. In the light of the historic developments one stands almost paralyzed at the complications which must inevitably arise when the peace settlement is faced. That task promises to be of such a magnitude and character as to make the term "struggle" most appropriate. Some of the problems to be faced at the peace conference will be as old as civilization itself, and their solution will require wisdom and courage and an abandonment of a time-worn international policy.

The author is an international journalist with wide experience and extensive training. One marvels at the historic data at his command, especially those which pertain to European and Near Eastern conditions. He has an intimate first hand knowledge of these regions and a personal interest in the developments of these areas because he was born in Kief, lived for years in the Balkans, and traveled in the Near East.

While the book is written in popular style, it deals with highly technical topics. It will, therefore, not have the popular appeal which it merits. Because of its analytical character, this volume is designed for diplomats and students of international affairs.

Psychological Novel

THEY DARE NOT GO A-HUNTING. By Dorothea Cornwell. Dodd, Mead and Company, New York, 1944. 279 pages. $2.50.

DOROTHEA CORNWELL pictures characters vividly in this psychological novel that won for her the Dodd, Mead-Redbook $10,000 award. It is the story of a young woman, Julia Greer, who spent eighteen years within her dismally quiet home with her failing mother who could teach her nothing except fear. Her mother warned her that the only way to avoid pain and unhappiness was not to accept life but to withdraw from it, as expressed in the childhood verse,

> Up the airy mountain
> Down the rushy glen
> We daren't go a-hunting
> For fear of little men. . . .

When Dr. Scott prescribed life for Julia in the form of a new hair style, new clothes, and fun among friends —when engineer Mike Walton offered her happiness in love—and when active Truda Carter, reporter, taught her unselfishness, humility, and the nobleness of work accomplished despite pain and sorrow, Julia was subject to a conflict between her old, habitual, solitary life and her new, happy adventuresome freedom. Hers was a choice between spiritual death in insanity, like that of her mother, and normal happiness with possible sorrow and pain. Julia finally escapes her fear and chooses the responsibilities that come with love and motherhood.

Although this book is not intellectually profound and is written in an immature style, it shows insight into human nature. This is achieved by describing the difference between what the characters think and what they say and do. In keeping with the times, the book also shows the futility of the attempt to block out the effect of war by seclusion.

MILDRED POWELL

Cronin's Latest

THE GREEN YEARS. By A. J. Cronin. Little, Brown and Co., Boston. 1944. 346 pages. $2.50.

THIS is the latest book by the author of *Hatter's Castle, The Citadel,* and *The Keys of the Kingdom.* In *The Green Years* he has produced another fine bit of story writing and characterization based on a sympathetic understanding of human foibles and frailties. Perhaps there is much that is autobiographical in this novel. It portrays the youthful years of one who, in spite of many difficulties and much hardship, achieves the coveted opportunity to study medicine. It is the story of young Robert Shannon, orphaned very young, who must go to live with an odd assortment of relatives. The household in which he spends his

adolescence contains, among others, his maternal grandparents and great-grandparents. It is particularly his great-grandfather, old Cadger Gow, who helps him through his troubles, although the irresponsible, penniless, and dissolute old codger had made a complete wreck of his own life. Dr. Cronin shows his uncanny artistry in a high degree as he depicts the inner life of the young lad whose family background and religion made him an object of ridicule and persecution in a Scotch Protestant community. The book is recommended as one that will rank high in our modern literature.

Britisher in America

PIONEERS! O PIONEERS! By Hilary St. George Saunders. The Macmillan Co., New York. 1944. 186 pages. $2.00.

THE author made a flying trip to and through our country in 1943, under the auspices of the British Office of War Information and of our OWI. The purpose was to learn at first hand, and to report back to the English people, something about our war effort and about our civilian morale. That he was well equipped for his task is self-evident when his previous background is remembered —his long years of service at Geneva for the League of Nations and his more recent connections with the British Air Ministry.

His story shows a keen interest in our country and its people. He writes frankly, but without rancor, and he has a considerable appreciation of our problems. That his frankness did not please some of our people is seen from the fact that seven pages of his chapter on "Chicago" were deleted from the book, with this explanation: "My description of my conversations with Mr. Stoltz, chief editorial writer of the *Chicago Tribune*, and of what I saw in Cicero has been omitted in deference to his request and that of the editor of the *Cicero Review* backed by the threat of legal proceedings."

As we follow Mr. Saunders' account we see him talking with taxi-drivers, columnists, bellboys, laborers in munitions works, etc. He visited New York, New Orleans, Hollywood, Kaiser's shipyards, Chicago, Detroit, etc. His impressions of our country are mainly favorable. One enjoys reading the book and finds oneself very often in agreement with Mr. Saunders' conclusions. Unfortunately he did not touch at all upon one very vital phase of American life—our churches and their influence. John Buchan (Lord Tweedsmuir) in his *Pilgrim's Way* showed a better understanding of our people on this point.

Fast Novel

WORLDS BEGINNING. By Robert Ardrey. Duell, Sloan, and Pearce, Inc., New York. 1944. 244 pages. $2.50.

THIS book is advertised as a short novel by a young writer, Robert Ardrey, whose chief contribution thus far has been in the field of the drama. However, the small volume, as far as literary form is concerned, bears little resemblance to a novel.

With a setting twenty years after the end of World War II, the book is written in the manner of a first-person reminiscence. The author, a newspaper reporter, takes us to various parts of America to witness incidents which play a major part in shaping the new nation. That is all there is in the way of plot. And there is even less in the matter of character portrayal.

Therefore, *Worlds Beginning,* which isn't a novel, is truly a sketchy blueprint of that which Mr. Ardrey believes must be the future America —socially, economically, and politically. Very vividly, he pictures the tension between capital and labor, between the property holders and the "have nots," between the negroes and the whites. More to the point, he shows those tensions bringing bankruptcy, anarchy, and chaos to the country.

It is out of this awful state of affairs that his new system, the commonwealth, comes. Briefly, this is an economic set-up by which everything in a given industrial unit is owned by the workers, the producers. Those who are responsible for the profits get a proportional share of the profits. It is a share and share alike scheme which avoids Socialism and Statism on the one hand and Capitalism on the other.

The author frankly states that his plan is purely tentative and necessarily incomplete. There are many questions which he cannot answer. How may the system be applied to government? Where in the picture does agriculture fit? These and many more go unanswered.

Written in the blunt, straightforward, even childishly simple style of the moderns, Hemingway, et al., the little book is extremely readable and fast moving. Some will no doubt be offended by the language used; but if this can be overlooked every reader will probably enjoy surveying with the author the terrible possibilities of life in post-war America.

W. D. Loy

Folk-Experiences

STORIES. By Erskine Caldwell. With an Introduction by Henry Seidel Canby. Duell, Sloan and Pearce, Inc., New York. 1944. 236 pages. $2.50.

POOR-WHITES and negroes of the Georgia pine country and Maine farm folk are the characters in these twenty-four short stories selected from Caldwell's works by Henry Seidel Canby. In the greater number of the stories the protagonist is some person who is being treated with mild or with violent injustice; some of these pieces are so simplified as to be mere propaganda, but others deal with the situation powerfully. A disreputable comic, "my old man" or "Pa," is the leading figure in a few uproarious stories. In the remainder, eccentrics of various kinds, sometimes in tall-story situations, are presented.

In two excellent stories at the end of the volume, "Saturday Afternoon" and "Kneel to the Rising Sun," Caldwell develops one of his favorite themes, the wasteful tyranny of decadent Southern whites. In the first the lynching of a thrifty and respect-

ful negro is perpetrated by a community of easy-going, envious whites, from whose point of view the story is told. In the second a sadistic landowner is able to murder a negro and starve his white share-croppers because of the fanatical conviction of feudal duty and race solidarity which persists—a dishonoring yet ennobling force—among the poor-whites.

Another story of a mistreated negro, "Candy-Man Beecham," borders on the tales of eccentrics. This seven-foot saw-mill worker is crossing the country Saturday night to see his yellow gal. "The bushes whipped around his legs, where his legs had been. He couldn't be waiting for the back-strike of no swamp-country bushes." But his harmless exuberance makes the whites uneasy, and the night policeman shoots him down. "Country Full of Swedes," one of Caldwell's best pieces, also deals with a clash between the exuberant and the ill-assured, but here the vein is purely comic. To a house across the road from a prim, anxious Maine family comes a storm of Swedes:

Out in the road in front of their house were seven-eight autos and trucks loaded down with furniture and household goods. All around, everything was Swedes. The Swedes were yelling at one another, the little Swedes and the women Swedes just as loud as the big Swedes, and it looked like none of them knew what all the shouting and yelling was for....

Sheer farce is achieved in "Handsome Brown and the Aggravating Goats," a story of the "Pa" series. "Maud Island" and "August Afternoon" present adventurous love as a sort of aristocratic remnant among the degraded whites. "The Grass Fire," one of the Maine stories, is the best of those that concern eccentrics. When Caldwell aims above facile effects, he is able to write well of a wide variety of folk-experiences.

War in the Balkans

GUERRILLA. By Lord Dunsany. The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Indianapolis. 1944. 252 pages. $2.50.

THE inhabitants of the little Balkan city were stunned by the entrance of the conquerors. "One day they were ringing their bells in the little capital, for news of a fine stand that one of their divisions had made. The next day the Germans were marching down the main street." But fifteen men followed Hlaka to the fastnesses of a mountain that shadowed the city, and soon it was being whispered: "There's an army up in the Mountain. It will free The Land."

Lord Dunsany's book is a lyric of the release that such men feel when they renounce law to champion their country. It is also a detailed manual of guerrilla methods. As both it constitutes invigorating reading. But to another aspect of outlawry, the anguishing responsibility for reprisals and the effect of unaccustomed violence on the outlaw himself, Dunsany gives only slight attention; this limit to the scope of the book is disappointing.

Dunsany's simple and exact prose makes possible an integrity which is surprising in a work that combines

the lyrical and the technical: "Hlaka was lost to sight of his men at once, and the lorry came nearer with its great searching beam, till the huge shadows leaping up from it were close to the mountaineers. And then they heard one shot, and the light went out."

Good Analysis

IDEAS IN AMERICA. By Howard Mumford Jones. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. 1944. 304 pages. $3.00.

THIS is a book, by a distinguished scholar of American letters and culture, which will be of interest to all who are concerned with the American tradition and way of life. It is a series of addresses delivered by Mr. Jones, the present Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Harvard University, during the past ten years—addresses which deal with American literature, American history, and American philosophy.

If the book has a definite thesis it is that we need to make a systematic appraisal of our literature to discover just what we, as Americans, have given and have to give to the world. Along with many others of us, Mr. Jones deplores the lack of emphasis placed on our literature by scholars and by critics, pointing out that American writing is the one true instrument for an analysis of our culture.

Particularly noteworthy is his idea that as long as American writers are given the opportunity to publish what they write we need not fear "that either fascism or communism will conquer the American mind." It is our *belles lettres* which furnish us our final refuge from foreign ideologies. Throughout the book, the author emphasizes the fact that our literature, an expression of our culture, is the bulwark against the ideas and aims of totalitarianism. In American writings one finds an expression of the value of the individual as against the value of a race, which fact is the major premise of argument for the fascist ideal.

The need for an intelligent handling of our minorities, the increasing importance of the Middle-West as a factor in the shaping of American culture, the judgment that internationalism is the only answer for the future—these and many other pertinent ideas are presented in a simple style that makes reading a pleasure. Though heavily documented in places, *Ideas in America* is a book to be appreciated by the casual reader and the American scholar alike.

More on the Bear

AMERICAN RUSSIAN FRONTIERS. Ninth in *Calling America* series. Survey Associates, Inc., New York. 1944. 96 pages. 50 cents.

THIS ninth number rounds out five years of the *Calling America* series which have been spearheads in the wartime work of Survey Associates as a cooperative educational society operating along borders of research and journalism. The twenty-four contributors to this number, among whom we note such distinguished names as Henry A. Wallace, Donald M. Nelson, Maurice Hindus,

and Walter Duranty, present what seem to us sober and factual accounts of what is going on in present-day Russia. The theme of the symposium is suggested by Henry A. Wallace in the words, "We must never allow ourselves to be put in a position which is antagonistic to Russia . . . I have every reason to believe that Russia is the natural friend of the Americas in the years immediately ahead." Because of the many areas of Russian life covered in this volume, the readability of the accounts, our country's contribution to Russia's war effort, this symposium ought to find a warm welcome. Discussion groups interested in modern Russia will find it an excellent guide.

We read with special interest Helen Iswolsky's "Spiritual Resurgence in Soviet Russia" from which we take the liberty to submit the following:

> The election of Patriarch Sergius in Moscow last September, together with the later meeting there of the Ecclesiastical Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church, marked a reversal of the Soviet's anti-religious policy . . .
>
> The government put a stop to anti-religious propaganda which had deeply and widely wounded the people's consciousness. The activities of the Union of the Godless were stopped, its official organ suspended. Religious functions were permitted on a larger scale; churches were gradually reopened; special orders were issued requesting military commanders at the front to respect the religious feelings of officers and men . . .
>
> In 1938, Emelyan Yaroslavsky, late head of the Union of the Godless, published an official report stating that militant atheism had not succeeded in uprooting religion in Russia. According to this report, two-thirds of the peasant population of Russia and one-third of the urban population had remained attached to their faith . . .
>
> Article 123 of the Soviet Constitution, promulgated in 1936, assured freedom of worship. That meant that religious services could be performed. But while this article specifically provided for "freedom of anti-religious propaganda," it did not mention freedom of religious teaching. Thus there was no warrant that religion could be taught publicly in the Soviet Union. The fundamental law has not been amended by the re-establishment of the Patriarchate . . . Meanwhile, though Church and State remain strictly separate, it is obvious that the long struggle between religion and communism has subsided.

The paper-cover volume contains good maps and striking illustrative materials. Fifty cents invested in this publication will pay rich dividends.

Powderkeg

CENTRAL UNION OF EUROPE. By Peter Jordan. Introduction by Ernest Minor Patterson. Robert M. McBride & Company, New York. 1944. 111 pages. $2.00.

IN this book the author submits a carefully reasoned plan for the future of countries which lie between Russia and Germany. They are: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Albania, and Greece. It is well known that these countries have for centuries been the powderkeg of Europe set off time and again by one of the Great Powers. It is also known that they comprise widely disparate groups resulting from differences in language,

religion, resources, and traditions. It is perhaps not generally known that they embrace a total population of 115 million people, that they possess vast natural resources, and that they are one of the greatest reservoirs of skilled labor in the world. Nor is it commonly known that all these countries have at least one unifying bond: they have all been, for centuries, under the influence of Western ideas and culture.

The treaty of Versailles restored autonomy to each of these eleven countries. Each therefore developed its own government and its own economic and military system without particular regard to the other. As a result of this isolationism, it was easy for Hitler, after he had overpowered Poland, to overrun in turn each of these countries or to exert sufficient pressure that some of them readily joined the Axis. If these 115 million people had been united in a federation, Hitler would have found it far more difficult to conquer them.

Mr. Jordan argues, with a vast amount of supporting evidence, in favor of a regional federation of Central Europe. Such a federation will, so he attempts to demonstrate, successfully oppose Pan-Germanism to the West as well as Pan-Slavism to the East and will provide opportunity for the peaceful development of each of the countries in Central Europe.

The author's views may seem unrealistic, if not fantastic, in view of the spheres of influence which Russia and England are exerting in these countries at the present moment. But if the author is right in his assumption that the age of small powers is over, he is right, too, in the opinion that only strong regional federations of small countries can hope to offer successful resistance to the encroachments of the Great Powers.

Mr. Jordan has made a significant contribution to the intricate problem of Central Europe. Though his argument leaves many questions unanswered, it deserves thoughtful and unbiased consideration.

Aid to Democracy

A GUIDE TO PUBLIC OPINION POLLS. By George Gallup. Princeton University Press, Princeton. 1944. 104 pages. $1.50.

MR. GALLUP, founder and director of the American Institute of Public Opinion, has rendered a distinct service by publishing this simple catechism of information on public opinion polls. Under eighty questions, perhaps the most significant that anyone interested in public opinion polls could raise, he supplies straightforward and clear answers. When the reader has carefully thought through both questions and answers, he not only recognizes, in a general way, the value of public opinion polls, but he also inclines to the belief that of all social science techniques these polls, as they are now conducted by well known organizations, approximate most closely the scientific method employed in the natural sciences. Prof. T. V. Smith once told his class, "The combined opinion of a large number of people is of more value than the opinion of an individual." True. But true only

in the measure in which that combined opinion honestly reflects the opinions of the individuals composing that group. Polls of public opinion are trying as best they know how to capture the honest opinions of groups and, by determining these opinions, to help speed the process of democracy.

Apostle of Lenin

FAITH, REASON, AND CIVILIZATION. An essay in historical analysis. By Harold J. Laski. The Viking Press, New York. 1944. 187 pages. $2.50.

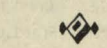
As in his previous works, especially in his *Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time,* so also in this most recent book Mr. Laski leaves an indelible impression on the minds of his readers. He writes with compelling power. Whether it is the sincerity of his convictions which is discernible in all his writings, or his firm grasp of historical facts and currents of thoughts, or the even and rhythmical flow of language, or the simplicity and lucidity of his style —perhaps it is all of these and many more factors which like a swift Alpine torrent carry the reader along to deeper insights, to broader horizons, and to a searching appraisal of his own prejudices and convictions. When one lays aside the book written by Mr. Laski, one knows that profound changes have taken place in one's soul.

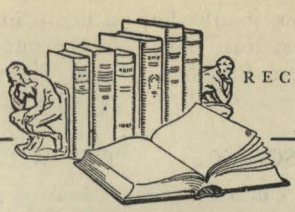
In this book the author proceeds from the thesis that the Russian Revolution is the only sure hope for the world. We shall exploit victory only in the measure in which the countries of the whole world adopt the Russian pattern. Mr. Laski believes that an acquisitive society is chiefly responsible for the present day revolution. The victory of the Allies, if it is to be followed by the execution of a great idea, must liquidate such a society. All this is, of course, not new. Many others have said the same thing and are saying it now. But what is new in Mr. Laski's thesis is his daring attempt to draw a parallel between the Russian faith and the Christian faith. The latter faith, so Mr. Laski believes, became a world-conquering faith in the first four centuries of our era chiefly for the reason that it offered the hope of heaven to the poor and coerced the rich to mitigate the sufferings of the poor under threat of damnation. But that faith of the early Christians, so Mr. Laski continues, has, since the rise of science and the conflict of science with religion, lost its appeal. Moreover, the Christian faith has, since the Reformation, allied itself more and more with power and capital and has failed to provide economic security to the common man. The new world-conquering faith is that of the Russian Revolution because that faith offers hope and security to all.

This is, in brief, the thesis. Mr. Laski ingeniously develops this thesis in brilliantly written chapters, each of which strengthens his argument. To select from these chapters any items particularly arresting and significant seems difficult if not impossible. Every page is replete with scintillating observations, profound interpretations, striking illustrations, and

reveals the author's wide knowledge of current and older literatures.

The weakness of the argument is that Mr. Laski consciously leaves out of consideration entirely the supernatural element which was basic in the faith of the early Christians. His attempt to rationalize that faith fails to explain the remarkable triumph of that faith in spite of violent persecutions and bitter criticisms. Mr. Laski appears to overlook that man "does not live by bread alone." Certainly he needs bread, he needs at least a modicum of economic security. While the Christian Church has every reason to confess that in its care for the underprivileged it has fallen far short of executing the commandment "love one another" and those other great precepts in which the Bible exhorts Christians to promote the well-being of all their fellowmen, no other faith has appeared in history, and none will appear, which so clearly reveals to man his place in the universe and so successfully provides him with spiritual security as does the Christian faith. Mr. Laski does not seem to appreciate that there are millions in Russia right now who in spite of the fact that they are enjoying a measure of economic security are nevertheless praying for the day when they can again worship God and the Savior without let or hindrance and find in the spiritual truths of the Bible their greatest happiness and satisfaction. In short, there exists no economic and political program which in and by itself can provide for all of man's wants, not even the Russian Revolution.



A BRIEF GLANCE AT  RECENT PUBLICATIONS

A SURVEY OF BOOKS

IN SECRET BATTLE

By Lawrence Lipton. D. Appleton-Century Co., New York. 1944. 343 pages. $2.75.

LAWRENCE LIPTON'S publishers tell us that his new book "is a slice of his own life experience made into fiction." *In Secret Battle* exposes and denounces not only the foreign agents who have attempted, and still attempt, to create dissension and disunity in our nation, it also tears away the carefully assumed mask of patriotism behind which some Americans in high places and in low places aided and abetted the cause of Naziism in our nation.

Many citizens were sincere in their belief that the United States could keep out of World War II; others were the dupes of clever enemy agents; still others were unscrupulous men and women who were actually and actively disloyal to our government. Mr. Lipton is frank and outspoken. He is on solid ground; for his material was obtained at first hand.

In Secret Battle contains much interesting and important information dealing with sabotage and subversive undercover activities. Unfortunately, the author lacks the craftsmanship to make the most of the material at his command.

GENERAL IKE

A Biography of Dwight D. Eisenhower. By Alden Hatch. Henry Holt & Co., Inc., New York. 1944. 288 pages. $2.50.

THIS book was obviously written with an eye on the sales-appeal of General Eisenhower's current popularity and his central importance in the final drive on Germany. It is essentially a re-telling of the now familiar accounts of the North African invasion, the Sicilian and Italian campaigns, and D-Day in Europe. General Eisenhower is undoubtedly a great military leader and it is inevitable that an aura of glamor should surround him in the key position which he now occupies as the great battle of Europe moves to its tremendous climax. But it is still far too early to assign him his rightful place in history or to essay an accurate appraisal of his generalship.

Biographies such as this should be indefinitely postponed—at least until several years after the war. But then, writers, too, must eat.

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DEATH WAS OUR ESCORT

The Story of Lt. (j.g.) Edward T. Hamilton, USNR. By Ernest G. Vetter. Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York. 1944. 323 pages. $3.00.

THE market is glutted with war books these days. Most of them, hastily written and ephemeral in interest, are scarcely worth a second glance. *Death Was Our Escort* will certainly not be classified as great literature, and yet it ranks somewhat higher than the run-of-the-mill war books. Commander Vetter is an able scribe, and his book does make fascinating reading. So, if you want something that doesn't tax your cerebral apparatus too heavily and that will help you pass some interesting leisure hours, pick up *Death Was Our Escort.* You could do much worse.

THE BUILDING OF JALNA

By Mazo de la Roche. An Atlantic Monthly Press Book. Little, Brown & Company, Boston. 1944. 366 pages. $2.50.

THIS is the ninth volume in Mazo de la Roche's colorful and highly successful saga of the Whiteoaks family. *The Building of Jalna* is devoted to the adventures of Philip and Adeline Whiteoaks, the first members of this famous clan to build a home in the New World. It will be warmly received by readers who have followed the fortunes of the popular fictional family.

THE WILD BLUE YONDER

Sons of the Prophet Carry On. By Emile Gauvreau. E. P. Dutton & Company, Inc., New York. 1944. 386 pages. $3.00.

EMILE GAUVREAU'S exciting and timely book deals in a thoroughly convincing manner with the tremendously important part air power has played, and continues to play, in the war which we are now waging. Without our mighty air armadas the invasion of Hitler's *Festung Europa* and our many victories over the Japanese would have been unthinkable. "If the Germans," says the author of *The Wild Blue Yonder,* "could have had our air force for only one day and had used it against the invasion, there could have been no landings." Upon the death of General Billy Mitchell, who had espoused the cause of air power with more vision than tactfulness, Gauvreau, an ardent disciple of that famous soldier, determined to continue the work begun by the martyred Air Prophet. Power in the air, and plenty of it, is indispensably necessary for the defense of our country against aggressors, just as it would be the most effective weapon aggressors could, and would, use against us if, for any reason whatever, we should neglect to be prepared.

Christmas Verse

Manger Musings

Bleak the wintry scene and bare;
And bare and bleak
The stabled hostel of Thy birth,
Thou most high Son of God.

Cold the winds on freezing hills;
And, like them chill,
The selfish hearts Thy flame must touch,
Thou burning Torch of Love.

Brown and dead the rustling grass;
But not less dead
The futile lives Thou must make live,
Thou new-born Prince of Life.

Soft the white and errant flake;
How gentler still
Shall be the wooing of Thy Word,
Thou Preacher to the Poor.

Scant Thy bed, Thy cradle poor;
And scant and poor
The years to be, O homeless One—
Thou Heir of Heaven and Earth.

Beats Thy wail upon the night;
But who will soothe
Thy pain where gardened olives loom,
Thou Bearer of all sin?

Lonely Thou, most princely Babe;
But lonelier still,
Sweat-beaded, drooping on the rood,
Thou Christ of Calvary.

—Richard A. Jesse

Christmas Night Prayer

Silver the bells, and liquid,
Pouring out their praise
Across the frosty dark...
And soft, soft the snow
That hushes all the harshness out
To make the world a shining.

Now in this stillness,
Jesus, little Child,
I know the shepherds' love flame,
Too, within my heart,
And I would give the Magi's gifts
Into Your baby hands.

The hour does not keep
Of all which sings and shines
Within this holy night,
And clangor hems the heart again
... Shadow closes in.
Love's flame burns low.

Jesus, little Child,
Beyond the hands stretched out
In need, let me glimpse
Your baby hands,
And in them lay the myrrh
Or frankincense or gold
That I would give this holy night
Into Your keeping.
Let me remember, Jesus,
When love's flame burns low.

—Helen Myrtis Lange

Church Window

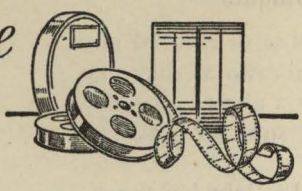
Window of God, fretted with colored glass,
Twirling the yellow sunbeams as they pass
Only to tell us beauty is a ghost
And life a flower in the summer grass.

Window of God, after the light has flown,
Glowing, as if with colors of its own . . .
December beauty sleeps among the weeds,
Life is a seed October winds have sown.

—Allen E. Woodall

Another Advent

No angel's wings with feathery sweep
Shall touch Thy lowly bed this night;
But overhead, on wings of death,
The wide-winged bombers made their flight.
Not gifts they bring for cheery hearths,
But fire and ruin to fair homes,
Until the carol breaks in sobs
And tears blot out the happy tones.
O God, this is Thy lovely earth
And men have made it hate and sin;
But send again Thine angel hosts
And Thy dear Son shall enter in.

The  *Motion Picture*

THE CRESSET *evaluates one of the world's most powerful forces*

MOTION picture patrons who have been bored, disappointed, annoyed, or just plain disgusted by inferior war and propaganda films may at last take heart and look forward to better cinema fare—unless, of course, the controversy which has been raging in the screen world results in nothing more than shouting and name-calling. It all began when, not long ago, Elliot Paul, author of *The Last Time I Saw Paris* and *The Life and Death of a Spanish Town,* and, more recently, a writer for the M-G-M studios, directed a vigorous and caustic criticism at motion picture producers, writers and directors—and at the various government agencies whose business it is to "keep Hollywood in line with official policies." In an article published in the *New York Times* Mr. Paul says:

> If ever an American who pays a small sum for admission to a motion picture theatre is to know and feel and see what goes on under Nazi or Jap occupation, what invasion really does to hearts and homes, how other people feel when victory means to them, personally, the sacrifice of their home, garden and kids, writers and producers must be chosen to manufacture victory stories and post-war stories that have some bearing on reality. . . . Hollywood thus far has botched the job of presenting World War II. The excuse is that producers do not believe the American public wants to be depressed with reality. But depressing a public with falsity and claptrap is still worse. Now that the film *Wilson* has demonstrated that a film biography does not necessarily have to be all hooey in order to make money, perhaps some studio will take the plunge and come out with a World War II film that has essential elements of truth.

Mr. Paul's forthright remarks did not go unheeded or unanswered. Critics and commentators were, on the whole, inclined to agree with his observations—taking exception, however, to the well-known author's charge that *no* good war pictures have been

made in the United States since *All Quiet on the Western Front.* Speaking for his colleagues, screen-writer Howard Estabrooks declares:

> The writers of Hollywood do feel their responsibilities and the civic obligation it entails. To date we have been less articulate than seems either necessary or desirable. Something is now being done by writers in Hollywood to focus attention on the type of motion picture that has risen and developed in the few swift years of this war—the motion picture in which the idea and the entertainment content are so well blended that the result is superior entertainment.

Well, we'll see.

What will be the fate of the German nation when the fanatical Nazi leaders and the arrogant Prussian Junkers have been beaten into unconditional surrender? What fate do the German *people* deserve? What part did the *average* German play in the development of Hitler's aggression? *The Seventh Cross* (M-G-M, Fred Zinneman) shows us a cross-section of the people of the Third Reich in the year 1936. An adaptation of refugee Anna Segher's poignant novel, *The Seventh Cross* is a powerful and effective denunciation of the Nazi ideology. Here we see Nazis and anti-Nazis, good Germans and bad Germans, kindly men and women who are appalled and sickened by their *Führer's* evil machinations, and cruel men and women who were willing to grow fat and prosperous at the expense of their own countrymen. Those who advocate complete subjugation for a defeated Germany have protested that the picture's sympathetic portrayal of good Germans may be construed as propaganda for a soft peace. But is it? Isn't the fact that so many *good* Germans remained silent while thousands of *innocent* Germans suffered and died in German prisons and in German concentration camps the most terrible indictment of all? No, *The Seventh Cross* isn't effective propaganda for a soft peace. It is an eloquent warning to all men of good will to be eternally on their guard against any and all hate propaganda. The story of the hunted and embittered fugitive anti-Nazi, George Heisler, is portrayed with moving realism by an exceptionally fine cast headed by Spencer Tracy and Hume Cronyn.

The Master Race (RKO-Radio, Herbert J. Biberman) presents a timely, thought-provoking dramatization of the problems which will confront officers of the Allied armies when they begin the difficult task of restoring order in the areas of Europe which have been subjected to German domination and occupation. We have been told that the Nazis are not ready

to discard their plans for world-domination, that when the fanatical leaders have been crushed, we will have not a true peace but only an armistice during which they will prepare for World War III. This is the theme which is expounded in *The Master Race.* Although it is a serious, well-made film, *The Master Race* is too frail a vehicle to carry the full weight and import of a very big theme.

One of the best of the current war pictures is *The Eve of St. Mark* (20th Century-Fox, John M. Stahl), George Seaton's excellent screen adaptation of Maxwell Anderson's highly successful stage play. This is the simple, homely tale of a draftee farm boy's experiences in an army training camp in the months before we entered World War II and, later, on a besieged island of the Philippines in the first bitter weeks after Pearl Harbor. It is superbly played by a well-chosen cast.

Much less successful is the dramatization of Pearl Buck's widely read novel, *Dragon Seed.* True, there are moments when *Dragon Seed* (M-G-M) rises to impressive heights in its portrayal of the heroic resistance and the brave spirit of the courageous Chinese people. But most of the time the spectator is unhappily aware of the fact that this is only a high-priced Hollywood cast moving about on an elaborately constructed Hollywood set.

It's a little hard to think of *Heavenly Days* (RKO-Radio, Howard Estabrooks) as dangerous political propaganda. It seems entirely safe to assume that our armed forces abroad aren't likely to be disturbed or corrupted by Fibber McGee's dreams and cogitations in his enactment of the role of America's Absolutely Average Man. Now that November 7 has come and gone, the O.W.I. has rescinded its overseas ban on this amusing but wholly undistinguished comedy.

Casanova Brown, directed by Sam Wood, is the first picture to be released by the newly organized International Pictures Corporation. A fine cast is hopelessly bogged down by a ridiculous plot. Even back in 1928 the stage hit, *Little Accident,* wasn't a particularly good play. The screen revivals which appear periodically have been no better—and *Casanova Brown* is no exception. It's too coy, too studied, and too much given to crude horseplay. Gary Cooper plays Gary Cooper for all he's worth, and Gary Cooper isn't the Casanova type.

This has been a banner year for elaborate musical productions. Three recent releases faithfully follow the familiar pattern. *Greenwich Village* (20th Century-

Fox, Walter Lang), a technicolor film starring Don Ameche, spins the old yarn about the ambitious young musician who aspires to fame and fortune. *Sweet and Low-Down* (20th Century-Fox, Archie Mayo) features Benny Goodman and his famous band—and guess what! It tells us all about a young musician who aspires to fame and fortune! Both films present new tunes and old tunes and some fine novelty turns.

Brazil (Republic), starring Virginia Bruce and Tito Guizar, lavishly scatters gayety, romance, drama, and song-and-dance routines over a setting which stretches from New York to Brazil. This time it's a woman writer in quest of new material for a book. She gets it. In the crazy make-believe world of Hollywood it really is "time for a change."

It's time for a change for Bette Davis, too. In *Mr. Skeffington* (Warners, Vincent Sherman) Miss Davis creates another of those horrible females who make you think of something you'd find under a stone in a dark, damp cellar. *Mr. Skeffington,* in spite of a good cast, is thoroughly silly from beginning to end.

The Editor's Lamp

PROBLEMS
CONTRIBUTORS
FINAL NOTES

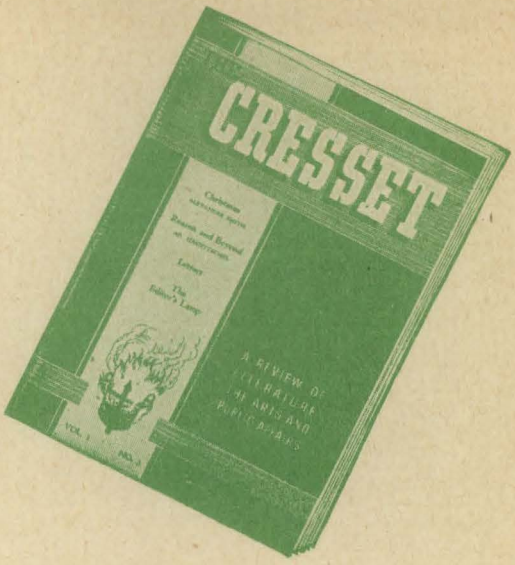
THE CRESSET Associates join in extending to all our readers best wishes for a blessed and happy Christmas. We include in our greetings especially our many readers who are serving their country across the Atlantic and Pacific, in the far battlezones of this global war. It is our sincere hope that another Christmas may see us all together again in a land that has much reason to be thankful for the coming of the Savior. May His peace be yours this Christmastide.

Following our traditional Christmas custom, THE CRESSET Associates again have woven a "Christmas Garland," which expresses our thoughts and emotions at this blessed season. We welcome one guest contributor to this year's "Garland." The piece entitled "G. I. Christmas" was written by Edmund Arnold, young Michigan journalist who is now serving with the armed forces.

Our business department makes the obvious remark that THE CRESSET will make an excellent Christmas gift. To make it still easier, they have inserted a special Christmas gift order blank somewhere in these pages. Incidentally, THE CRESSET will be especially appreciated by the boys overseas —if we are to judge from the letters that keep coming to us from servicemen and chaplains.

Guest reviewers this month include Jessie Swanson *(Ride with Me, There Were Two of Us, God on a Battlewagon)*, M. Alfred Bichsel *(The Conductor Raises His Baton)*, Mildred Powell *(They Dare Not Go A-Hunting)*, and W. D. Loy *(Worlds Beginning)*, all of Valparaiso University.

For Christmas



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